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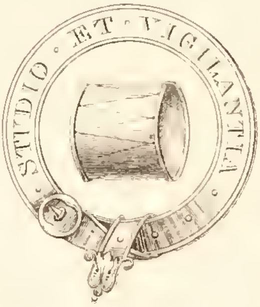

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THE CRADLE

OF THE TWIN GIANTS,

Science and History.

BY

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CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Mesmerism 1

CHAPTER II.

Mesmerism 34

CHAPTER III.

Mesmerism.—Clairvoyance 52

CHAPTER IV.

Clairvoyance—(*continued*) and Homœopathy . . 78

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

Pneumatology 97

CHAPTER II.

Apparitions of the Deceased, commonly called Ghosts 107

CHAPTER III.

Witchcraft 134

CHAPTER IV.

Witchcraft among Barbarous Nations . . 161

PAGE

CHAPTER V.

Fairy Mythology 174

CHAPTER VI.

Fairy Mythology 188

CHAPTER VII.

Of Talismans and Charms . . . 228

BOOK V.

CHAPTER I.

Alchemy 269

CHAPTER II.

Of the Recipes for, and the Alleged Success of, Transmutation, etc. . . . 293

CHAPTER III.

Historical Recapitulation 353

CHAPTER IV.

Historical Recapitulation (*concluded*) . . 382

THE CRADLE

OF THE TWIN GIANTS.

BOOK III.

Science.

(Resumed.)

CHAPTER I.

MESMERISM.

The subjects we have discussed in the last chapters, lead us by an easy transition to the dominion of mind over matter, and the uses to which it may be applied:—and unquestionably one of the most important, as well as the most interesting, relations in which it can be viewed, is that of its connection with medical science,—a connection which at no time could be treated with ridicule. Indeed scarcely any instance of it could be rejected, much less derided, until an increased knowledge of Natural Philosophy had taught mankind to form some conjecture as to the bounds of their power over natural substances. When Bacon declared the probability of those wonders which seemed so impossible to his contem-

poraries, he was supposed to mean that, in subsequent periods, Magic would be openly and successfully practised; and it is not a little to the credit of his discernment, that he so well calculated the probable limits of scientific acquirement. In former days, had any writer affirmed that in the course of half a century, it would become possible to go from London to Bristol in one hour, he would have been almost universally disbelieved; but if his learning and wisdom, in other respects, had haply occasioned any one to give credit to him in this, the difficulty would only have been solved by supposing the aid of infernal agency. Now, although no one has as yet witnessed so rapid a rate of travelling, we are by no means unwilling to believe, when told of its probable future accomplishment. There is one sense, then, in which we must always acknowledge "occult causes," and "occult properties," although we no longer call them by names so mystical as of yore. Medicines are administered every day, although we cannot even guess the mode of their operation. We have a tolerable idea of the probable result, and with this, very probably, we must for ever be contented. We can hardly say what is and what is not beyond the bounds of human investigation: but if we consider the extreme difficulty which invests many subjects — such, for example, as the effect of volition upon the nerves, and through them upon the muscles; the nature of animal life, and many others which might be instanced, we shall hardly expect even an approximation to a true theory of these things.

These considerations, whilst they prevent us from

regarding with contempt the superstitions from which the philosophers of the Middle Ages were never entirely free, cannot fairly be adduced to excuse the same notions in the present day. But we are not therefore entitled, when any claims of the kind are set up, to treat those who assert them either as enthusiasts or impostors. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have produced their wonder-workers in what would have been called of old Medical Magic; and the most curious instance on record, perhaps, in the history of the world is Animal Magnetism. The effects which were certainly wrought by the animal Magnetisers, the number and importance of those who avowed their belief in the system, and the length of time during which it flourished, make it well worthy of consideration.

The virtues of the loadstone had been greatly extolled by the ancients; it had even been declared possessed of a rational soul, and capable of great moral agencies over the human constitution. Probably, on account of its attracting iron, it was supposed to be endowed with a general power of attraction; and it was hence used to heal dissensions in families, to excite love, and to promote friendship. In a case like this, and in an age like that of which we speak, any analogy, however slight, was a sufficient foundation for a belief in such qualities; they could not be too absurd to be credited, and if a cause was asked, the "occult properties of Nature" was an answer always ready and always satisfactory. Many of these notions came down to later times. Paracelsus, in his "Archidoxorum," gives such a list of remedies as may match even those of Pliny; but

when he speaks of the loadstone, he becomes, if not very correct, at least not unreasonable. Trusting to its power of attracting iron, he orders it to be reduced to a powder, and applied in the shape of a plaster to wounds, in order to draw out the particles of iron which might by abrasion remain in the flesh. The idea that this remedy was an effective one was so strong, that, though Dr. Gilbert of Colchester wrote expressly against it so far back as A. D. 1600, demonstrating that by being pulverized it was deprived of its attractive force, it continued in vogue for upwards of a hundred years later, and is not, among the uneducated classes, altogether discontinued in the present day. Paracelsus had so high an opinion of the medical virtues lodged in the magnet, that there were few diseases which he considered would not yield to its attractive power, and those few were soon added by Van Helmont and his other disciples. It seems singular that they did not congratulate themselves upon having, in this mineral, obtained the elixir of life. The science of magnetism had by this time begun to excite the attention of the philosophical world; and those remarkable facts which it developed and which were already ascertained, presented a basis sufficiently broad for the erection of many fanciful and ingenious theories. The idea was soon caught that Magnetism was a subtle, invisible fluid, passing through the whole Universe, and which, though only as yet known through the medium of the loadstone and iron, was yet existing and operating in every other substance. Kircher entertained this opinion, and distinguishes accordingly between animal, vegetable, and mineral Magnetism. As,

however, the loadstone was the only substance known through which any magnetic experiments could be made, physicians were obliged to exhibit mineral Magnetism alone in cases of disease, trusting to the sameness of the fluid and the gentleness of its operation in this state.

M. le Noble, a French ecclesiastic, obtained great celebrity, in 1775, from his mode of applying the magnet in cases of nervous and spasmodic affections, particularly in tic douloureux. His plan was to cause powerful but light magnets to be worn in the dress, near the parts disordered; as, for instance, in caps, for nervous headache. His success being noticed he was induced to apply in 1777 to the Royal Society of Medicine in Paris, and to request that a committee appointed by that body would examine the virtues of his magnetic dresses. The request was complied with. M. Andry and M. Thouret were appointed as a committee, and after a long and patient investigation, delivered a report greatly in favor of the plan pursued by M. le Noble.

While this was going on in Paris, a Jesuit at Vienna had made use of magnetised steel plates, in medical cases, with considerable success. This man, whose name was Hell, appears to have been somewhat of an empiric, if not wholly so; for he attributed the success which he obtained, not so much to the magnetic fluid as to the peculiar shape of his plates. Among those who witnessed his practice, and, in fact, assisted in it, was Anton Mesmer, who had taken his degree of M.D. at the University of Vienna at the age of thirty-two, and who had commenced his medical career by writing a trea-

tise "On the Influence of the Planets on the Human Body." This, which shows the nature of Mesmer's studies, may be regarded as a first step towards those doctrines which he subsequently maintained. Mesmer employed the plates which Hell had made; and having performed some remarkable cures he attributed them to his mode of employing the plates, and to the magnetic fluid which they contained. Hell published the results of Mesmer's experiments, but gave only as a cause the form which he had himself devised for the plates. Mesmer replied and Hell rejoined; and as notoriety appears to have been Mesmer's aim, he was not much disappointed when the victory was declared to be Hell's.

While this dispute continued, Mesmer was always writing and talking about his pretended discoveries. Had Mesmer been a truly philosophical inquirer he would have been pronounced on the very verge of an important discovery, so singular are some of his assertions. "*I have observed*," says he, "*that the magnetic matter is almost the same as the electric fluid, and that it may be propagated in the same manner as this by means of intermediate bodies.*" It has been suspected in our own day, and, indeed, more than suspected, that magnetism and electricity are, in fact, one and the same fluid seen under different circumstances.[1] But the character of Mesmer forbids us to suppose that his remark was more than a chance illustration; the very next words destroy the illusion; "Steel is not the only substance adapted for the purpose; I have

[1] See Prof. Barlow's paper "On the probable Electric Origin of all the Phenomena of Terrestrial Magnetism," Phil. Trans. 1831.

rendered bread, paper, wool, silk, leather, stones, glass, wood, men, dogs—in short, everything I touched—magnetic to such an extent that these substances produced the same effects as the loadstone on the diseased. I have charged jars with magnetic matter in the same way as it is done with electricity." In fact, he was on the verge of a discovery perhaps still more important. This is an extract from a letter addressed to a friend at Vienna (M. Unzer), and such were the statements which he made in various communications to the learned societies of Europe, praying them to examine his pretensions, as the Royal Society of Medicine in Paris had done those of M. le Noble. All these, save the Academy of Sciences at Berlin, treated the application with silent contempt; and that, by way of answer, published what was considered a refutation of his theory. It may be remarked, that the chief case upon which Mesmer relied was that of a Mlle. Æsterline, who had been for some years living in his house. This young lady, who was, he tells us, suffering under a horrible complication of disorders, recovered by his magnetic treatment; and the whole tenor of the account is such as to imply that she was cured by a very skilful application of the magnetic fluid. But so absurd were his ideas of the magnet, and the mode of conducting the fluid, that this whole theory was shown to be unworthy of reception by the Academy. Finding that so inconsistent a scheme would not at all answer his purpose—finding, in fact, that the scientific men of that day were too addicted to close investigation to allow any error to be propagated under the mask of science, Dr. Mesmer adroitly altered

his plan, declared that the Berlin Academy had altogether misunderstood him, and having thus rescued himself from the grasp of philosophical inquiry, he took refuge in a profundity which would not have disgraced Paracelsus himself. He now came forward with a new theory—not avowedly so, but yet greatly differing from that which he had hitherto maintained. The magnet was the instrument in his hands, he said, of conducting not only the magnetic fluid commonly so called, but another subtle influence, which he called Animal Magnetism, and which he uniformly refused to explain. He considered this influence, if not centred, at least highly concentrated, in his own person; and he republished his observations on the case of Mlle. Æsterline, in a form accommodated to this new theory. While thus employed at Vienna, he was not idle in experimentalizing; but, failing in his attempts to cure some eminent persons, and having involved himself in a dispute with many of the faculty at that city, and being, moreover, rather discouraged by the Court, and looked upon with great disdain by the learned, he left Austria, and, after travelling in many parts of Germany and Switzerland, finally settled at Paris.

Sprengel [1] says, that having undertaken to cure a girl, named Paradis (a pensioner of the empress), of blindness, he, on declaring that he had succeeded, was found, on examination, to have been guilty of such gross imposture as to receive an imperial order to leave Vienna in twenty-four hours. At all events, it is certain that, in the beginning of 1778, he left Austria, and went to Paris. Here

[1] Sondschriben uber Thier Mag., p. 104.

he at once entered upon practice, and wrote, in 1779, his "Mémoire sur la découverte du Magnétisme Animal," in which he expresses himself as follows: —The magnetic fluid is a fluid universally diffused; it is the medium of a mutual influence between the heavenly bodies; it is so continuous as to have no end; its subtlety admits of no comparison; it is capable of receiving, propagating, communicating all the impressions of motion: it is susceptible of flux and reflux. The animal body experiences the effects of this agent; and it is by insinuating itself into the substance of the nerves that it affects them immediately. "There are," he observed, "particularly in the human body, properties analogous to those of the magnet; and in it are discerned poles equally different and opposite. The action and the virtues of Animal Magnetism may be communicated from one body to other bodies, animate and inanimate. This action takes place at a remote distance, without the aid of any intermediate body; it is increased, reflected by mirrors, communicated, propagated, augmented by sound; its virtues may be accumulated, concentrated, transported. Although this fluid is universal, all animated bodies are not equally susceptible of it; there are even some, though a very small number, which have properties so opposite, that their very presence destroys all the effects of this fluid on other bodies. Animal Magnetism is capable of healing diseases of the nerves immediately, and all other diseases mediately; it perfects the action of medicines; it excites and directs salutary crises in such a manner, that the physician may render himself master of them. By its means, he

knows the state of health of each individual, and judges with certainty of the origin, the nature, and the progress of the most complicated diseases; he prevents their increase, and succeeds in healing them without at any time exposing his patient to dangerous effects, or troublesome consequences, whatever be the age, the temperament, and the sex."[1] And, in the preface to the same work, he unhesitatingly declares, "In Animal Magnetism, Nature presents an unusual method of healing and preserving mankind."

As a commentary on these assertions, we may notice the interview which took place between Mesmer and Dr. Ingenhousz. The doctor had, it appears, from Mesmer's account, spoken slightingly of the Magnetic Theory, and even went so far as to recommend him not to publish his experiments; the reply was, "Come and see them yourself;" and a relapse of Mademoiselle Æsterline, who was resident in Mesmer's house at the time, afforded an admirable opportunity for the display of his magnetic process. Dr. Ingenhousz came. "The patient," says Mesmer, "was then in a faint, accompanied by convulsions. I informed him that this was a favorable occasion for him to convince himself of the existence of the principle which I had announced to him, and of the property which he himself possessed of communicating it; I made him go near the patient, from whom I retired, desiring him to touch her. He did so; she did not move; I called him back, and, taking him by the hand, communicated to him the Animal Magnetism. I then

[1] Mémoire, p. 74.

made him go again near the patient, keeping myself always at a distance, and desired him to touch her a second time, the result of which was, her being thrown into convulsive motions. I made him repeat this touch several times, which he did with the point of his finger, varying his direction each time, and, to his great astonishment, he produced always a convulsive effect in that part which he touched. At the termination of these operations, he told me that he was convinced. I proposed to him a second trial. We retired from the patient, so as not to be perceived by her, even if she should recover her consciousness. I presented to Dr. Ingenhousz six porcelain cups, and begged him to point out the one to which he wished me to communicate the Magnetic virtue. I touched that which he chose, and made him apply successively the six cups to the head of the patient. When he came to that which I had touched, her hand moved, and she appeared to feel pain. Dr. Ingenhousz having repeated the experiment with the six cups, the same effects were produced. I then put back the cups into the place from which they had been taken, and after a short time, taking hold of one of his hands, I desired him to touch with the other any of the cups which he pleased: he did this, and the cups being brought into contact with the patient, the same effects were produced as before. The communicability of the principle being thus established to the satisfaction of Ingenhousz, I proposed to him a third experiment, in order to make him acquainted with its action at a distance, and its penetrating virtue. I directed my finger towards the patient, at the distance of

about eight paces; and immediately the body became convulsed, so as to raise it upon her bed with the appearance of pain. I continued in the same manner to direct my finger towards the patient, placing, at the same time, Ingenhousz between her and me. She experienced the same sensation. These trials being repeated at the pleasure of Ingenhousz, I asked him if he was satisfied with them, and convinced of the wonderful properties which I had announced to him, offering, if he were not, to repeat our trials. His answer was, that he had nothing more to desire, and that he was convinced; but he exhorted me, by the regard which he had for me, not to communicate anything relative to this matter to the public, in order not to expose myself to its incredulity." Subsequently we find Dr. Ingenhousz, both in writing and by word, declaring that the whole affair was a preconcerted trick between Mesmer and his patient; and his words to the latter, even by his own report, are very ambiguous and unsatisfactory. But we must carefully distinguish between the character of the system and that of the supposed inventor.

In all this we find no attempt made to attribute the effects produced to the magnet; the experiments were made by Mesmer with his finger, and by Ingenhousz with cups which Mesmer had touched: and this was the plan which was pursued at Paris. Here, as at Vienna, apartments were arranged for the reception of patients, and a peculiar apparatus established. This apparatus, though not considered necessary, as we see by Mademoiselle Æsterline's case, was yet deemed very important. It was called the *baquet* (bucket), and consisted of a large circular

vessel of oak, about eighteen inches high, and covered with a top pierced full of holes. It was filled with powdered glass, iron filings, sawdust, and bottles of water, which had been previously subjected to Mesmer's operation by the finger. Through the holes were thrust iron rods, a long one and a short one alternately, bent outwards at top, as conductor of the fluid. Round this *baquet* the patients were placed in rows, one behind another; and the rods being accommodated to their position, they placed them in contact with those parts of the body in which was seated their disease. In a corner of the room was a pianoforte, on which slow and solemn airs were played; for sound, as we have seen above, was a means of conducting Animal Magnetism. Meantime it was more actively elicited by the rod and the finger of the operator, who placed his hand or his rod on the seat of disease. The practice of Mesmer at Paris could not fail of exciting attention; and, as many remarkable effects were really produced, the absurd pretensions of the supposed inventor did not nullify the claim which these effects presented to scientific investigation. Among the earliest as well as the most important converts to this new agency was M. d'Eslon, doctor regent of the Faculty of Medicine at Paris, and physician to M. le Comte d'Artois. He, without adopting any theory, recognised the effects produced by Mesmer's mode of operating, and operated himself in the same way. His conduct caused him to suffer much opposition from the faculty; and at last, to justify himself, he published a list of his own observations. This, as might have been expected, did but add fuel to the fire; and when,

a short time afterwards, he laid before the Royal Academy of Medicine four proposals for investigating the pretensions of Mesmer, that body most philosophically replied by requiring him to be more cautious, by suspending him from his vote in their assembly for a year, and threatened, if at the expiration of that time he persisted in his new creed, to erase his name from their lists. As to the propositions, they unanimously rejected them; but by this time it was become a matter of indifference to Mesmer what the faculty thought of him or his proceedings. He had many patients, and more were continually flocking both to him and to D'Eslon; indeed, such scientific investigation was by no means to his taste, and he expressly stipulated that any inquiries should be, not as to how his cures were performed, but whether they were performed or not. So great was his popularity, and so implicit the confidence which his patients placed in him, that he had but to announce his intention of quitting France, and the very throne was besieged with petitions that some inducement should be held out by Government to retain him in France. His own demand, when applied to, was singularly modest. He merely required a large estate, which he named, and a splendid income by way of fixed salary; to have no public duties, but to be at free leisure to use his powers as he pleased; and he, in return for these trifles, would make France his residence. It would hardly be believed, were it not a matter of history, that Louis the Sixteenth actually offered Mesmer thirty thousand francs per annum, on condition of taking three pupils, to be named by the Government. This offer, however, was refused. Mesmer calculated

that his practice was worth much more, and that the salary offered would not compensate him for the necessity of revealing his secret to three persons named by the Government. He resolved now to quit France, and retired accordingly to Spain, where he practised as he had done in Paris.

In the meantime, the year appointed by the Royal Society of Medicine to M. d'Eslon, to review his opinions in, had elapsed; and he was summoned by that body, either to retract his belief in Animal Magnetism, or to submit to expulsion; but D'Eslon was too convinced of the efficacy of this agent, and, probably, found it too profitable, as well as too successful, to resign. Instead of appearing before the Academy, he avowed himself a practitioner of Animal Magnetism; and was, accordingly, with several other members of the same body who had been convinced by his experiments, formally expelled. On hearing this, Mesmer exclaimed against D'Eslon, as he had formerly done against Father Hell; and complained that attempts were made to rob him of the reward of his discoveries. His popularity in Paris had not declined in consequence of his temporary absence; and his complaints were so well listened to, that a very large sum was raised by way of subscription, to secure the continuance of Magnetism, and to reward its discoverer. Mesmer now returned to Paris, and continued his practice and his lectures. Berthollet, among others, attended them, and has left on record his opinion (which he communicated to Mesmer at the time), that the mysterious influence so much vaunted of, did not exist, and that all the effects of Magnetism were produced

by the excited imagination of the parties, and by the heat, friction, &c., employed in the process. However, M. Berthollet's opinion, valuable as it might be in the estimation of scientific men, was not of much avail in a case where the stream of experience and popular favor ran so strong. It was determined that, without regard to the expense, all the elements, principles, and applications of this new science, should be carefully engraved; and that, in order to preserve to them a suitable and merited dignity, only one copy should be delivered to those who should be collectively authorized to establish a magnetic institution and courses of instruction in some towns that were fixed upon. "The physicians of Lyons acquired one of these copies, secured against an indiscreet publicity by the precaution of having the essential and technical words expressed by figures or signs, of which we are furnished with the key. Hence the mystery that surrounded the science and obscured a practice which undoubtedly might have been very useful in the exercise of ordinary medicine. As survivor, I possess this engraved work in all its integrity." These words were addressed by M. Picher Grandchamps, of Lyons (one of the disciples of Mesmer), to M. Bourdois de la Motte, who was, in 1825, the president of a commission appointed to examine and report upon Animal Magnetism. This is mysterious enough; but Mad. Campan gives in her journal an anecdote still more strong. M. Campan, who was a decided believer in Magnetism, was by his own desire removed to the house of Mesmer, when suffering from pleurisy. While there, Mad. Campan, of course, visited him frequently, and begged to know what treatment M.

Mesmer thought of employing. "I purpose," he replied, "to introduce into the bed of the patient by his left side, one of three things—a young woman of a dark complexion, a black hen, or an empty bottle." "Sir," said Mad. Campan, "if it is all the same to you, I should prefer your trying the empty bottle." Here was a choice of remedies, which, since the dark ages, can hardly be paralleled. This was, indeed, calling into exercise "the occult properties of things."

Some other similar circumstances had already begun to exert an influence on the public mind, when the theory was subjected to a more searching investigation than any which it had yet experienced,—an inquiry which, in the eyes of the then philosophical world, finally settled the question of Animal Magnetism. A commission was formed by royal authority, of which the following celebrated men were members: the president, Bailly the astronomer, Lavoisier, and Benjamin Franklin. The others were Salir, D'Arcet, Guillotin, and Majault, members of the Faculty of Medicine at Paris; and le Roi, de Bory, and the three above-named Members of the Royal Academy of Sciences. The report was drawn up by Bailly, and, after describing the "baquet," he thus goes on to notice its effects:—"the sick persons, arranged in great numbers, and in several rows round the *baquet*, thus receive the magnetism by all these means,—by the iron rods which convey to them that of the *baquet*: by the cords wound around their bodies, and by the connection of their thumbs, which communicate to them that of their neighbours; by the sound of an agreeable voice, or of the pianoforte, diffusing the magnetism in the air. The patients were also

directly magnetised by means of the finger and rod of the Magnetiser moved before their faces, above or behind their heads, and on the diseased parts, always observing the distinction of poles. The Magnetiser acts on them by fixing his eyes on them: but above all, they are magnetised by the application of his hands and by the pressure of his fingers on the hypochondres, and on the regions of the abdomen—an application often continued for a long time, sometimes for several hours. Meantime the patients, in their different conditions, present a varied picture. Some are calm, tranquil, and experience no effect; others cough, spit, feel slight pains, local or general heat, and have sweatings; others again are agitated and tormented with convulsions. These convulsions are remarkable with regard to the number affected by them, to their duration, and force. As soon as one begins to be convulsed, several others are affected. The Commissioners have observed some of these convulsions last more than three hours: they are accompanied by the expectoration of a muddy viscous water brought away by the efforts. Sometimes streaks of blood have been observed in this fluid; and among others, there is a sick young man who often brings up large quantities of blood. These convulsions are characterized by the precipitous involuntary motion of all the limbs, and of the whole body; by the constriction of the throat, by the leaping motion of the hypochondres and the epigastrium, by the dimness and wandering of the eyes; by piercing shrieks, tears, sobbing, and immoderate laughter; they are preceded or followed by a state of languor and reverie, a kind of depression, and even drowsiness. The smallest

unforeseen noise occasions shudderings; and it was remarked that the change of tone and measure in the airs played on the pianoforte had an influence on the patients; so that a quicker motion agitated them more and renewed the vivacity of their convulsions.

"Nothing is more astonishing than the spectacle of these convulsions; one who has not seen them can form no idea of them. The spectator is equally astonished at the profound repose of one part of the patients and the agitation which animates the rest; at the various accidents which are repeated, and the sympathies which are established. Some patients you will observe devoting their exclusive attention to each other, rushing towards one another, smiling, speaking with affection, and mutually soothing their crises (convulsions). All are under the power of the Magnetiser; it matters not in what state of drowsiness they be, his voice, a look, a gesture, brings them out of it. Among the patients in convulsions were always observed a great many women, and few men; the first convulsions were always one or two hours in being formed, and as soon as one was formed, all the rest began successively in a short time. It is impossible not to recognise in these constant efforts a great power which agitates the patients, and of which the Magnetiser appears to be the depository."

Such were the effects of Animal Magnetism as observed by such men as Bailly, Lavoisier, and Franklin. But it was not merely the effect of this powerful agent, whatever it might be, thus formally elicited, that the Commissioners wished to observe; they examined individual cases, and noticed the consequences of private magnetising. Two cases we

shall mention as examples; for all were of the same nature, and attended with nearly the same results. It was asserted by the magnetists that a tree might be made the depository of the magnetic influence, and affect accordingly all who came under it or even near it. "A tree," says Mesmer, "was magnetised by first touching it and then retiring a few steps from it, all the while directing the fluid upon it, from the branches towards the trunk and from the trunk towards the root." On some occasions circular seats were placed round the tree, and cords suspended from it so as to supply the place of the *baquet*. When the patients had seated themselves, they wrapped the cords round the diseased part of their bodies, and formed a chain of communication by their thumbs. The Magnetiser was furnished with a rod, and proceeded in the same way which Mesmer adopted in his public apartments. A tree was magnetised in Dr. Franklin's garden at Passy, and one of M. d'Eslon's patients subjected to its influence. Mesmer would allow no investigation to be made of his proceedings, but M. d'Eslon, being willing to facilitate the inquiries of the Commissioners, all their remarks apply to his practice, which, as performed by precisely the same means, and attended with the same results, cannot without inconsistency be considered as a different system.

A youth of twelve years of age was brought into the garden (he was aware for what purpose), and led first to one tree, then to another. He had, it should be remarked, no knowledge of which tree had been magnetised, and his eyes were bandaged, that he should not see the operations of M. d'Eslon,

who continued to magnetise a particular tree. Under this arrangement all the symptoms indicated by Animal Magnetism were brought on, and, finally, a crisis was produced at a distance of twenty-seven feet from the tree which had been magnetised. This case was (the Commissioners remarked) even by itself decisive. Had the boy been insensible to the effects of Magnetism under the tree on which M. d'Eslon had operated, it might have been attributed to his insensibility to the fluid; as it was, the effects were produced without the aid of M. d'Eslon at all. Again, two women, chosen by M. d'Eslon himself, were brought to Dr. Franklin's house, and after having their eyes bandaged, were induced to believe that M. d'Eslon was magnetising them; the crisis came on accordingly, though nothing was done. But in order to make the case still clearer than even these instances had done, one of M. d'Eslon's patients was actually operated upon by him, in the presence of some of the Commissioners, without her being aware of it, and no effects were produced. The report of the Commissioners therefore declared, very much in the words which Berthollet had before employed, that after five months' examination, and after carefully seeking (but in vain) for proofs of the existence of a magnetic fluid, such as that asserted by Mesmer and D'Eslon,—after submitting themselves to its action in varied ways, without experiencing any effect,—and after having further ascertained that all the effects produced by it could be elicited where it was not even pretended to be employed,—that magnetism could produce no effects without the aid of an excited imagination, and that the imagination,

when excited, could effect all that was attributed to magnetism,—they did not hesitate to ascribe all the wonders they had witnessed to the power of the imagination, the tendency to imitation natural to all mankind, and the animal heat and friction employed by the Magnetists; and, further, they considered Animal Magnetism hurtful and dangerous to society, particularly in a moral point of view.

This report was at that time quite sufficient for the scientific world; but such were not those on whom Mesmer depended both for profit and popularity. He complained greatly of the investigation which was going on, said that the secret was in his hands alone, and at last took certain pupils, from whom he received nearly 14,000*l*., and to whom he communicated his doctrines. They formed societies to propagate them, and thereby brought upon themselves the indignation of Mesmer for making public what he called his secret, and which, in spite of the large sums he had received, he still professed to consider as his own property. He, however, now quitted France and retired to Frauenfeldt, by the Lake of Constance, where he resided till 1814, when he removed to Mersburg (his native place), and died the next year aged eighty-one.

But while Animal Magnetism received so severe a blow at Paris by the decision of the Commissioners, it made its appearance in another form, and with different effects, in the provinces. One of Mesmer's pupils (the Marquis de Puysegur) retired to his estate at Busancy, near Soissons, and there with his brother practised gratuitously. The result of their proceedings was a new feature in the effects of Mag-

netism, to which they gave the name of magnetic sleep. After speaking of some cures which he had performed in the way prescribed by Mesmer, and with the usual attendant circumstances, he says, "These slight successes induced me to attempt being useful to a peasant, a man of twenty-three years of age, who had been four days confined to his bed with a catarrh. I went then to see him. It was last Tuesday, at eight in the evening. The fever had just become milder. After raising him, I magnetised him. What was my surprise on seeing this man, at the end of two or three minutes, fall asleep in my arms, without convulsions or pains! I continued the crisis, which occasioned giddiness. He talked, spoke aloud of his affairs; all this was in sleep. When I thought his ideas were affecting him disagreeably, I checked them; brought him (still in sleep) to the magnetised tree; his head then sunk down, and he fell into a state of perfect somnambulism. At the end of an hour I took him home to his house again, when I restored him to his senses. Several men and women came to tell him what he had been doing. He maintained that it was not true; that, weak as he was, and scarcely able to walk, it would have been impossible for him to go down stairs and walk to the tree." This new symptom, which soon became universal, was declared to be the proper effect of Magnetism; and that spasms and convulsions were only produced in consequence of unskilfulness in the mode of applying it. M. de Puysegur seems to have been chiefly guided by the directions of the peasant whom he had cured: for though not remarkable for intellect when awake,

he was, when thrown into a crisis of magnetic sleep, perfectly marvellous. "According to him, it is not necessary for me to touch every one—a look, a gesture, a wish is sufficient. When he is in a crisis I know nobody more profound, more prudent, more clear-sighted than he."

These wonders were not of a nature to stop here; this shutting out of external impressions only gave a more vivid perception of those from within, and accordingly, patients when in this state, not only walked, talked, preached, advised, and prophesied, but were even able to transfer the action and power of the senses to parts not ordinarily capable of exercising them. The stomach and even the fingers, were endowed with sight, smell, and hearing; the mind was enriched with the knowledge of ancient and foreign languages: and so great was the accession of knowledge, which, with the crisis, "would come like phantoms, so depart," that any magnetic patient might, during his paroxysms, perform the duties of a "professor of things in general," and discourse learnedly—"*De omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*."

An event, however, was now approaching, so awful in its nature, and so extensive in its consequences, as to deprive of interest all contemporary questions; and, indeed, during its terrific progress, to have put almost a complete stop to the development of anything but the more stormy passions of human nature. Animal Magnetism lost its importance, and seemed totally forgotten, when the French Revolution broke out; and it was not till after the restoration of tranquillity, that mankind were at leisure to redirect their minds towards its pretensions. Then it was, that, as if by

way of compensation for the time that it had lost, it flourished in the country of the inventor so much, that public lectures were delivered on it at the Universities, and journals, devoted to its details, conducted by men of distinguished attainments. There were now three sects of Animal Magnetists; some who adopted the theories of Mesmer, and were called Mesmerists; others, who, practising without theory, merely recorded their results: those at the head of whose school had been the two MM. de Puysegur; and, lastly, another class, who still more simplified the process, having neither magnetised trees, *baquet*, nor rods, but who merely offered up prayers by the bedsides of their patients. These were called spiritualists, or, from the name of their founder, Barberinists. But, whatever difference there might be in the mode by which the fluid was supposed to be conveyed, or the theory which was adopted in reference to it, all agreed in the wonderful nature and curative effects of "magnetic sleep." "In Mesmerism," says Oker, "animal instinct arises to the highest degree admissible in this world. The *clair-voyant* is thus a pure animal, without any admixture of matter; his operations are those of a spirit; he is similar to God, his eye penetrates all the secrets of nature. When his attention is fixed on any of the objects of this world —on his disease, on his death, his well-beloved, his friends, his relations, his enemies—in spirit he sees them acting; he penetrates into their causes, and the consequences of their action; he becomes a physician, a prophet, a divine. Such a state of spirituality and pure animality is that of the Saints."

Now, all this is but the revival of a very old

psychological theory. It must be acknowledged, however, that it was much better, and more philosophically maintained of old, than by the Magnetists of this period. The great authority upon the subject in France at present, is the "History of Animal Magnetism," by M. Deleuze; and with his account of the effects produced by magnetic action, we shall conclude this chapter.—"When Magnetism produces Somnambulism, the being who is in this condition acquires a prodigious extension in the faculties of sensation; several of his external organs—generally those of sight and hearing—are inactive, and all the sensations which depend upon them, take place internally. Of this state, there is an infinite number of shades and varieties. But, in order to form a right judgment of it, we must examine it in its greatest difference from the state of waking, passing over in silence all that has not been confirmed by experience. The Somnambulist has his eyes shut; he does not see with his eyes, and hears better than one who is awake. He sees and hears only those with whom he is in magnetic communication. He sees nothing but that at which he intends to look; and he generally looks only at those objects to which his attention is directed by those in magnetic communication with him. He is under the will of his Magnetiser in regard to everything that cannot hurt him, and that he does not feel contrary to his ideas of justice and truth. He feels the will of his Magnetiser; he perceives the magnetic fluid; he sees, or rather he feels, the interior of his body, and that of others (provided that he touch them); but he commonly observes only those parts of it which are not in their

natural state, and disturb the harmony of the whole. He recovers the recollection of things, which, when awake, he had forgotten. He has prophetic visions and sensations, which may be erroneous, in some circumstances, and which are limited in their extent. He expresses himself with astonishing facility. He is not free from vanity. He becomes more perfect, of his own accord, for a certain time, if guided wisely; he wanders when he is ill-directed. When he returns to the natural state, he entirely loses the recollection of all the sensations, and all the ideas, which he had had in the state of somnambulism; so that these two conditions are as foreign to one another as if the somnambulist and the waking man were two different beings."[1]

After this, however, we are told that the last is the only invariable symptom, and that the rest are rarely united in one person. Deleuze is a respectable writer, and anything coming from him is entitled to consideration; and his theory is that perception in magnetic patients is carried on by means of an internal circulation of the fluid which transmits the impressions immediately, and without the intervention of the nerves, to the brain. This has given rise to a strange species of quackery,—that of magnetising, not the patient, but the physician, who forthwith sees all that is wrong in the patient's frame,—a method that has one advantage above all others, that it does not require even a pretension of learning or skill in the practitioner; he or she becomes imbued with all knowledge when brought to a state of somnambulism, however ignorant before.

[1] Deleuze, Hist. Crit. du Mag. An., vol. i. p. 185.

In the year 1827[1] two women named Burckhardt and Couteriere (the latter a lace-maker) were tried at Paris for prescribing for and advising a young man named Gustave Pigault, and so terrifying him by representations of the diseased state of his viscera, that he committed suicide. It appeared in evidence, that the deceased was a very weak-minded young man, and given to lowness of spirits on account of supposed ill-health, for which, in spite of the repeated representations of his mother, he had been in the habit for three years of applying to the prisoners. The medicines which they gave him (for it did not appear that he was himself magnetised) were of a very powerful description. One day he said to his mother, "that woman (Couteriere) has deceived me; she has given me a medicine fit for a horse—composed of aloes, saffron, mercury, and julep. I have a fire in my bowels." At length, a definite offer was made that, on condition of paying six hundred francs, he should be cured in two months. Couteriere came to the house, was magnetised and fell asleep. "Heavens! what do I see?" was her exclamation, "your body is filled with spots of blood. I am not satisfied with you. You will never get better." The result of her exclamation has been seen. The person who magnetised her was a music-master, named Geslin, and he, when asked if he ever had recourse to magnetic sleep himself, replied, "I am very wakeful, nobody was ever able to send me to sleep."

But after making all due allowance for the peculiarities of Mesmer's own character, the quackery of

[1] Hermes, April 1828, p. 60.

which, in numberless instances, his disciples were guilty, there remains a mass of facts deserving of the most attentive consideration. These facts, too, are supported by an array of names which it would be absurd to count as unimportant, and we shall, therefore, conclude this chapter by the theory of Animal Magnetism, as set forth by M. Dupotet de Sennevoy. He is led to "adopt the theory of a magnetic fluid being transmitted from the nervous system of the Magnetiser to that of the person operated upon; but it is not to be forgotten that great mental energy, sustained concentration of the will, is necessary to direct and control its influence. He then, who is magnetised, passes into a state of complete physical insensibility, during which he awakens, as it were, within himself, and enters into a new mode of existence and relation with the external world, for all his perceptions are now exquisitely fine, and independent of the instrumentality of mere corporeal organisation. And if any person should ask what is the moral tendency of the doctrine of Animal Magnetism, I should answer, that it obviously tends to establish the spiritual ascendancy of man over those material conditions which, in his ordinary state of being, fatally restrict the apprehensions, capacities and comprehensions of the soul; and this very manifestation of its existence, partially divested of the grosser elements in which it is temporarily obscured, affords a precursory evidence of a future state of being, which belief in itself cannot fail to suggest those principles of self-government and moral conduct which can alone promote the real welfare and happiness of society.

"In the ordinary routine of life, persons act magnetically on each other, when perhaps they are least aware of it; thus, he who would obtain the esteem of another, must mentally exert all his energies to establish a reciprocity of feeling; he must act and produce an effect on the mind of the person he regards; and if he succeed, the affections of both subsequently become commingled, so that a perfect intellectual unity is induced; and hence the novelist did not exaggerate truth when he described two such beings as moving with 'one soul in a divided body.' In various conditions of life, we may observe the magnetical principles are brought into operation. The orator, endeavouring to move the feelings of his hearers, rouses up and concentrates all his nervous energies to effect his object, and led gradually away by the spirit of his persuasive eloquence, he passes into a state of excitement almost identical with magnetic *extase*, during which the divinest language flows almost unconsciously from his lips, for he is sensible of no mental effort in arranging the consecutive order of his thoughts, and the construction of his sentences; his ideas crowd upon him unsought, and are evolved with preternatural rapidity, so that he appears like one who is inspired, until his enthusiasm is over, and then, on returning to his ordinary state of being, he finds himself unable to reconstruct with the same harmony, and beauty, and power of language, the very oration he has just delivered.[1] Hence

[1] The account which Lord Brougham gives, in his Paley's Theology, of an orator busily constructing one sentence in his mind while he is uttering another, cannot be analytically made out; it will be observed, too, that his theory is at variance with the unity of consciousness.—*Vide* Paley's Theology. By Lord Brougham.

the ancients drew a marked distinction between eloquence and mere verbal oratory. 'Eloquence, indeed,' says Pliny the younger, 'is the privilege of very few, nay, if we will believe Marcus Antonius, of none; but that faculty, which Candidus calls loquacity, is common to numbers, and the talent which generally attends impudence.'[1] Again, the physician also, to be successful, must act upon magnetical principles; he must constantly maintain a mental power or ascendancy over the mind and nervous system of his patient, in order that he may possess his entire confidence; and if this relation, or truly magnetic *rapport*, be not established, all his skill will prove unavailing. It may, indeed, with truth be affirmed, that the psychical influence of the physician over his patients, effects more good in many cases than the physical remedies which he prescribes. In domestic life, the magnetical sympathies by which individuals are associated together, and their affections consolidated, may often be strikingly observed; but many, perhaps, are not aware that the proximity of two persons to each other, so intimately commingles the nervous atmosphere by which each is surrounded, that there is an actual transference of vitality from the body of the one into the body of the other. This is no nursery dream—no gossiping fiction—but a fact which is well known to physicians. Hence Dr. James Copland, in his learned and very admirable Dictionary of Practical Medicine, observes, that, 'a not uncommon cause of depressed vital power is the young sleeping with the aged. This

[1] Letters of Pliny, the Consul, with occasional Remarks. By William Melmoth, Esq. 2 vols. London, 1748. Vol. i. p. 298.

fact, however explained, has been long remarked, and is well known to every unprejudiced observer. But it has been most unaccountably overlooked in medicine. I have on several occasions met with a counterpart of the following case:—I was, a few years since, consulted about a pale, sickly, and thin boy, of about four or five years of age. He appeared to have no specific ailment, but there was a slow and remarkable decline of flesh and strength, and of the energy of the functions—what his mother very aptly termed, a gradual blight. After inquiry into the history of the case, it came out that he had been a very robust and plethoric child up to his third year, when his grandmother, a very aged person, took him to sleep with her; that he soon afterwards lost his good looks, and that he had continued to decline progressively ever since, notwithstanding medical treatment. I directed him to sleep apart from his aged parent, and prescribed gentle tonics, change of air, &c. The recovery was rapid. But it is not in children only that debility is induced by this mode of abstracting vital power. These facts are often well known to the aged themselves, who consider the indulgence favourable to longevity, and thereby often illustrate the selfishness which in some persons increases with their years.'[1]

"This transference of vitality is thus well marked in cases of extreme disparity of years between the parties approximated, as when the young are placed in contact with the aged; but the same transference, doubtless, will take place between persons of any age,

[1] Dictionary of Practical Medicine. By James Copland, M.D., F.R.S., &c. Art. Debility, vol. i. p. 475.

although, where the vital principle of the two persons exists nearly in an equilibrium, the effects will be less perceptible. Here, also, I would remark, that precisely on the same principle the mother acts magnetically on her child; she concentrates her thoughts and feelings on the object of her solicitude, and infuses into its yet unconscious bosom the elements of her own physical and moral constitution, so that, by this transference, the seeds of good or of evil are sown in the tenderest years of infancy, and in this sense is to be understood the scriptural phrase, that a tree shall be known by its fruits; not that the blind physical organisation can lead of itself to any such consequence, but that the spirit, which is the life even from within the trunk, shall permeate the remotest branches, and either give beauty to the flower and goodness to the fruit, or impregnate both with poison more deadly than the blight of the fatal Upas tree, which is reported to kill all that inhale the atmosphere around it. The principles of Animal Magnetism thus lead us to perceive relations between physical and moral conditions of humanity, which were before a perplexing mystery; they throw light on a variety of facts hitherto deemed inexplicable, if not incredible, in the early history of mankind; they place us in possession of a power whereby we can alleviate suffering and restore health to the afflicted; they lead us to entertain also the spirit of a philosophy which is of the most cheering description, annihilating as they do all those dark attributes of materialism which have so long thrown a gloom over the paths of Science."

CHAPTER II.

MESMERISM.

We have now briefly reviewed the history of Animal Magnetism, up to the period when it was revived by Dr. Elliotson, and when we consider that the imagination has been the most powerful agent that superstition has ever employed—both on account of the wonders which have been by it performed, and because, inasmuch as there is no necessity for imposture in the believers, the venerable and the virtuous may be and have been thereby enlisted on the same side as the mean and dishonest—an account of the only instance in which its powers have been subjected to the searching ordeal of scientific investigation cannot be unimportant. Enough was elicited by the Commissions at Paris to settle many disputed questions, to assign to the right cause many wonderful cures of past times, and to reconcile many historical passages with the principles of truth.

Before we proceed to consider the more recent Mesmeric phenomena, which we shall regard principally as exhibited in America, reserving for another chapter, the manifestations lately presented in England and France, we shall notice a few extraordinary cures performed, or said to be performed, of old.

There is an account of two by the Emperor Vespasian, which is worthy of note, first, because it is preserved by Tacitus, and next, because Hume has

attempted to equal the cures to those miraculously performed by our Saviour. Tacitus observes :[1]— "During those months which Vespasian was spending at Alexandria, waiting for a favorable season and fair weather, many wonderful events occurred by which the favor of Heaven and a certain inclination of the deities towards him might be exhibited. A certain man from the Alexandrian populace, commonly known to suffer from a disease in the eyes, threw himself at the emperor's feet, requiring with groans a remedy for his blindness, and stated that he had been warned by Serapis, whom that most superstitious nation worship above all gods, to entreat the monarch that he would condescend to touch with his spittle his cheeks and eyeballs. Another, diseased in the hands, prayed him, at the instance of the same god, that he would touch with his foot the unsound limbs. Vespasian, at first, ridiculed and refused them, and while they were beseeching him, seemed now to fear the reproach of vanity, and now to be brought by their prayers and the voices of his flatterers to hope. At length, he commanded inquiry to be made of the physicians, whether such blindness and such infirmity were to be overcome by human aid. They replied in various ways—'That in one man the power of sight was not gone, and would return if the obstacles were removed; that in the other, the limbs had fallen into a state of disease, but that if a salutary influence was exhibited, they might be restored; that it might please the gods to make the use of Cæsar as the instrument of so divine an operation, and, lastly, that if the remedy were found effectual,

[1] Hist. lib. iv. cap. 81.

the glory would be his, while, if otherwise, the ridicule would fall only on the unfortunate patients.' Thereupon Vespasian esteeming all things in the power of his fortune, nor that anything was to be considered incredible, with a glad countenance, and amidst the earnest expectations of the surrounding multitude, performed the things required. Immediately the hands were restored to their use, and the light shone upon the blind; both these events are still related by those who were present, though no advantage would result from falsehood." This anecdote is ably commented upon by Paley in his "Evidences," particularly the last observation, one quite unworthy of so great a writer as Tacitus. Why should those who had once affirmed the miracle contradict it afterwards, when it was quite certain that nothing was to be gained by the acknowledgment of such sycophantic meanness as the avowal would imply? Besides, Tacitus evidently took the story without much examination, and his mode of relating it is so careless that he seems to have scarcely thought it worth while to form an opinion either one way or the other. What we want to be informed about is—whether the cure was complete at once, or whether the patients, feeling themselves much benefited did not in gratitude, and out of compliment to their imperial physician, rather overrate the effects of his touch, and, whether the cures were permanent.

A little light, however, is thrown upon the disposition of mind manifested by the Emperor at the time by the following chapter, which is too important to be omitted.[1] "From thence Vespasian conceived

[1] Hist. lib. iv. cap. 81.

a greater desire to visit the sacred temple, and consult about the affairs of the empire : he commanded all to be kept away from the temple, and, having entered, and fixed his eyes on the (statue of the) divinity, he saw behind its back one of the Egyptian nobles, named Basilides, whom he knew well to be by illness at a distance of many days' journey from Alexandria. He asked the priests whether Basilides had entered the temple on that day? He asked those who had been about, whether he had been seen in the city? Finally, having sent couriers for the purpose, he found that Basilides had been at that moment of time eighty miles distant. Then he inferred that the appearance of that nobleman was a divine apparition, and from his name he interpreted the meaning of the oracle." The name signifies kingly, and Vespasian thereby inferred that he should be successful over all competitors for the empire. When a prince is in such a frame of mind as this, it is not likely that any events which tend to flatter and confirm it will be too scrupulously examined, and we have reason to believe, from the evidence of subsequent cures, such as those which we have related, and those which we must still relate, that some good effect, and probably very great, was produced by the imperial touch.

In the middle of the seventeenth century lived a gentleman of fortune, pious, and evidently sincere, whose power of curing diseases occasioned much discussion at the time. Mr. Valentine Greatraks[1] was a man of education, and so deeply was he disgusted with the commotions of his time, that he retired altogether from society during the protectorate of Cromwell:

[1] See "A Brief Account of Mr. Valentine Greatraks," &c. 1666.

his health was bad, and the effects of much solitude and nervous disorder produced temporary derangement. When recovered from this state, he resumed his active duties, and became a magistrate; but his mind was deeply imbued with some of the extravagant notions common among the Puritans of his time, to whom he now zealously attached himself; he became one of the "fifth monarchy men," and at last had a notion presenting itself constantly to his mind that he possessed the power of curing scrofula with a touch; this occurred to him at all times, and in all places; it was the subject of his dreams: he long resisted the idea, but finding that it did not leave him, he resolved to try the experiment, and to his great astonishment he perfectly succeeded. After exercising this power for about three years, he had an impression, equally powerful, that he could also cure the ague.

At this time (1662) that disorder was very prevalent at Affane, in Ireland, where Mr. Greatraks resided, and he was also very successful, though not uniformly so. After this, he imagined that his power extended to many other disorders, particularly epilepsy and paralysis, and in treating these his touch seemed to be influential, though not always alike. He himself treated it as a divine gift, and considered that the cases in which he failed were unsuccessful only through want of faith either in himself or his patients. It may have been noticed that the effects of Animal Magnetism were greater in proportion as the system itself became more known and more popular. This is the natural result in the case of a curative process dependent upon the imagination,

and the same was the case with Mr. Greatraks. The confidence placed in his powers seems to have been almost unbounded, and the number of persons who flocked to him for cure is thus described in the pamphlet before quoted; and which, it may be noted, is written in the form of a letter to no less distinguished a person than the Hon. Robert Boyle. "Great multitudes," says Mr. G., "from divers places resorted unto me, so that I could have no time to follow mine own occasions, nor to enjoy the company of my family and friends. Whereupon I set three days in the week apart, from six o'clock in the morning till six at night, to lay my hands on all that came, and so continued for six months at home. But the multitudes that came daily were so great, that the neighbouring towns were not able to accommodate them; whereupon for the good of others I left my home, and went to Youghall, where great multitudes resorted to me, not only of the inhabitants, but also out of England, so that the magistrates of the town told me that they were afraid some of the sick people that came out of England might bring the infection into the place;[1] whereupon I retired again to my house at Affane, where, as at Youghall, I observed three days by laying my hands on all that came, *whatever the diseases were*, and many were cured, and many were not, so that my stable, barn, and malt-house were filled with sick people of all diseases almost."—"Among the rest that came from England were two that had the falling-sickness, who no sooner *saw me* than they fell into their fits, and I restored them by putting my hands upon them." Even the touch of his

[1] The plague was raging at the time.

glove was efficacious, and on one occasion was the means, he tells us, "of discharging many devils from a woman, every one having been like to choke her before it went forth," an evident description of hysterical convulsion. Cures of the same nature were performed at the same time in Italy by Francisco Bagnone, and with the same occasional failures.[1]

Many of the higher classes in Italy attributed the cures of Bagnone to the power of imagination, and this, on account of his frequent failures in effecting cures on children.[2] Pechlin, to whom all these things were related, gives the same solution, and adds many more similar cures performed by one Marcus Avianus, who, like Greatraks and Bagnone, very often failed. A similar case is the power which used to be supposed lodged in the kings of England, of curing scrofula, though here the cases were indeed few and far between, while the failures were most abundant. The case of Perkins, an American, who pretended to have discovered a remedy in his metallic tractors, is interesting, because England was the scene of his experiments, and because his pretensions were subjected to the same sort of investigation as those of Mesmer and D'Eslon in France. It was in 1798 that this man made his public appearance in London, and his theory was that metallic rods, composed of two metals in the way in which *he* knew how to combine them, and used as *he* knew how to use them, had a great effect on the human frame by a galvanic action. This circumstance caused his proceedings to be looked upon with some consideration. Galvanism was yet in its earliest infancy

[1] Pachlini Observat. lib. iii. ob. 32. [2] Jacchinius.

—very little indeed was known of its possible effects, or of the way in which they might be excited, and when the singular effects which followed the application of the tractors (for such was the name which Perkins bestowed on his rods of metal) were seen, even the scientific were willing at first to believe that the assertions of the inventor deserved some degree of credit. Dr. Haygarth, an eminent physician of Bath, took up the matter and demonstrated that equally remarkable effects might be produced by wooden tractors, and the progress of galvanism soon showed the folly, as well as falsehood of Perkins's theory. The Quakers, however, patronized the tractors to so great an extent as to found a "Perkinean Institution," to cure the diseases of the poor without drugs or medical advice. In six years Mr. Perkins acquired ten thousand pounds, and left England, and in five after his departure, cures, tractors, and Perkinean Institution were almost forgotten.

The cases which we have been considering were mostly attended with convulsions, either in the disease itself, or the cure; and it seems also that where no spasmodic action was elicited, the modes of cure adopted by these people were for the most part ineffectual. This circumstance is implied by the report of the French commissioners, and is the cause that the "principle of imitation" was especially mentioned by them as one of the causes of those wonders produced by Mesmer and D'Eslon,—"cette imitation machinale qui nous porte malgrè nous à répéter ce qui frappe nos sens." There is scarcely a habit which may not be acquired involuntarily in this way—squinting and stammering are instances that will

occur to the memory of almost every person—convulsive disorders are also frequently communicated by this propensity.

The nephew of the great Boerhaave gives the following account of a disease of this nature, which was successfully treated by his uncle:—"In the house of charity at Haarlem, a girl under the impression of terror fell into a convulsive disease, which returned in regular paroxysms. One of the bystanders, intent upon assisting her, was seized with a similar fit, which also recurred at intervals; and on the day following another was attacked, then a third and a fourth; in short, almost the whole of the children, both girls and boys, were afflicted with these convulsions. No sooner was one seized, than the sight brought on the paroxysm in almost all the rest at the same time. Under these distressing circumstances, the physicians exhibited all the powerful anti-epileptic medicines with which their art furnished them, but in vain. They then applied to Boerhaave, who, compassionating the wretched condition of the poor children, repaired to Haarlem, and while he was inquiring into the matter, one of them was seized with a fit, and immediately he saw several others attacked with a species of epileptic convulsion. It presently occurred to this sagacious physician, that as the best medicines had been skilfully administered, and as the propagation of the disease from one to another appeared to depend on the imagination,—by preventing this impression on the mind the disease might be cured, and his suggestion was successfully adopted. Having previously apprised the magistrates of his views, he ordered, in the presence of all the children,

that several portable furnaces should be placed in different parts of the chamber, and that irons bent to a certain form should be placed in the furnaces; and then he gave these further commands, 'that all medicines would be totally useless, and that the only remedy with which he was acquainted was, that the first who should be seized with a fit, whether boy or girl, must be burnt in the arm to the very bone with a hot iron.' He spoke this with great dignity and gravity, and the children, terrified at the thoughts of this cruel remedy, when they perceived any tendency to the recurrence of the paroxysm, immediately excited all their strength of mind, and called up the horrible idea of the burning, and were thus enabled by the stronger mental impression to resist the influence of the morbid propensity."[1]

A gentleman, well known in the scientific world, related to the author of this work a circumstance that happened to himself, which, if the *medical* inferences be correct, is of very great importance. The relater's words were, as nearly as can be, as follows:—"I was walking through my own plantations, when I saw a cat sitting at the foot of a tree close to a piece of water. An idea immediately occurred to me that I would throw the cat into the water, and accordingly I stole from tree to tree till I could pounce upon her, and taking her up in my hands, endeavouring not to hurt her, I effected my purpose, but the cat bit me; and then, recollecting that she had looked ill and seemed strange for some days past, and also that after swimming across the water she almost immediately died, I was sorry for what I had

[1] Boerhaave, Hippoc. Dict. ix. sect. 406.

done, and considered that my prank was rather an inhuman one. It was soon, however, forgotten altogether. About six weeks afterwards I was taken, while at breakfast, with a sudden horror of liquids, and after a few minutes' thought, the truth flashed upon me like lightning; 'This is hydrophobia,' I exclaimed; 'but it is a nervous disorder, and I WILL NOT give way to it.' Accordingly, by a strong effort, I swallowed the coffee before me, and continued so doing till the difficulty first began to abate and at last entirely disappeared. I took some powerful medicines, and never had any recurrence of that alarming symptom."

If the symptoms here described were really those of hydrophobia, and occasioned by that disease in an incipient state, then the case is a most important one, but it was, perhaps, really unconnected with the bite of the cat, and required none of those exertions of mind to overcome. Instances may be multiplied almost *ad infinitum* of convulsive disorders being caused by the principle of imitation, and stopped by powerful efforts of volition, or by the judicious separation of the diseased from the healthy. In Shetland, the spread of a spasmodic disorder was checked by a rude kirk-officer tossing a woman who had often troubled him, into a ditch; she never relapsed, and others dreaded his remedy, as the children of the poorhouse did that of Boerhaave. Convulsions produced by religious excitement are to be classed with those we have been considering, and as some narratives of this kind have attracted much attention it will not be quite foreign to our subject briefly to notice some of them. Gassner, a Swiss ecclesiastic, a man

of whom it is difficult to pronounce whether he were an impostor, or an enthusiast, gives the following account of himself: being placed, he says, as a parish priest, near to Coire, his native place, he was afflicted with a continued melancholy, attended by some remarkable physical circumstances. Every remedy which could be suggested was tried in vain, till he was led to meditate on the influence of evil spirits, and their power to cause and aggravate disease; it appeared to him that his own was a case of disorder so caused, and if so, he felt convinced that no medical aid would avail him; but reflections on the powers which the church had conferred on him at his ordination, induced him to believe that he himself possessed as a priest the power of ejecting devils. A remedy thus in his own hands he tried on himself with complete success, and afterwards offering his services to those who were like himself afflicted, he found the same results with them, and thus obtained both reputation and practice,[1] but as Gassner only pretended to act in cases of demoniacal possession, and yet was extensively employed, it followed as a matter of course that diseases occasioned by infernal agency, must be alarmingly common, which, indeed, he declared was the case; but it appears that neither his doctrine nor the mode of exorcism adopted by Gassner, gave satisfaction to his diocesan,[2] for the Bishop of Coire dismissed him from his charge. He went now to Moersburg, the residence of the prince Bishop of Kostnitz, but here his proceedings met with the same treatment; that prelate wrote to the Bishop of Coire,

[1] Dr. De Haen, Essay on Miracles.
[2] Sprengel, Hist. de la Med. vi. 89.

begging him to recall Gassner, which was accordingly done: from hence he was summoned by the Bishop of Ratisbon, who warmly patronised him, and gave him considerable preferment. All this took place in 1774. Two years after this, Mesmer observed his cures, and makes the following observations, which seem very characteristic of the man.

"It was from the year 1774 to 1776 that an ecclesiastic, a man of great sincerity, but of too zealous a nature, performed in the diocese of Ratisbon, upon different patients of a nervous constitution, effects which appeared supernatural in the eyes of the least prejudiced and most enlightened men of that country. His reputation extended to Vienna, where the public was divided into two parties; one treated these effects as impostures and trickery, the other as miracles wrought by Divine power: both, however, were in error, and my experience had by that time taught me that in all this he was merely the instrument of Nature."[1] Mesmer wishes his readers to believe, and not without reason, that this man was, without knowing how to manage it, dispensing Animal Magnetism. At the same time that Gassner thus boldly ascribed a large share of human diseases to the agency of the devil, the same theory was largely discussed in Vienna, and Dr. Antonio de Haen, principal physician to the Emperor Joseph II., took a considerable share in the discussion. He acknowledged from the authority of Scripture that such a thing as demoniacal possession did exist, but in the course of many examinations he uniformly decided that there was no evidence of such possession in any of the

[1] Mémoire, p. 32.

patients submitted to his notice. He detected deception in every case on which the Government desired his decision, and for many years patients supposed to be suffering from infernal agency were placed under his inspection by Joseph II. and Maria Theresa. He published a work on magic dedicated to the Cardinal Eugenius, but in 1776, he addressed to the same person a book which is more known, namely, his Essay on Miracles. In this treatise he gives with great judgment and learning the true criterion of miracles, and exposes the absurdity of Gassner's pretensions; but one particular[1] which he relates is both curious and important. After describing the singular dress which Gassner wore, and his other mysterious preparations, and telling us that Gassner had contracted so great an intimacy with the devil as to hold long conversations with him in Latin on topics quite unconnected with patients or their disorders, he says, that discourses frequently turned *on the great services which the Jesuits had done to the church, and the devil's consequent hatred against them.*

After this, we need hardly seek further for a key to the whole proceeding, whether we set down Gassner himself as a knave or a dupe. He carried it rather too far, for he was shut up in a convent. The Archbishop of Prague cautioned his clergy against his practices, and the consequence was, *that his miraculous powers altogether left him.* But we must draw this chapter to a close, by coming nearer our own time. In 1822, Prince Alexander Hohenlohe, after having worked wonders for many years, cured, by his prayers at a distance, an Irish lady

[1] De Haen on Miracles, chap. v.

named O'Connor, who was a nun in a convent near Chelmsford, of a diseased arm; and, after this, several other ladies. These cures were gradual, but, if we may trust Dr. Badelly, the historian of them, they were both certain and permanent.[1] This is a subject upon which even superstition must be treated with delicacy, lest we should be supposed to cast a doubt upon those truly important and most consoling words of Scripture, "and the prayer of faith shall save the sick,"[2] "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."[3] We have no reason to suppose that the prayers of this prince are not those of faith, or that he himself is not a righteous man. Yet it would be difficult to draw the line of distinction between Hohenlohe and Gassner, and we may be permitted to ask; Is it not possible that cases may occur in which the "prayer of faith," "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man," may be answered by effects wrought on the body by physical and intelligible cause? If this be the case, and there are few who would be inclined to maintain the contrary, we are furnished with an additional reason for accepting with satisfaction the solution which scientific research has offered us. Impostors will of course reject such a solution; the "Friends" of Mr. Perkins, to prove that his cures were not effected through the power of the imagination, declared that he had cured a horse by his tractors, and the favorers of Bagnone asserted that he had restored children through the faith of their parents—but it is possible that the cure or the disease

[1] "An authentic Narrative, &c. By John Badelly, M.D."
[2] James v. 15. [3] James v. 16.

may have existed in the imagination of the owner, in the one case, and of the parents in the other. With regard to religious enthusiasm ill-directed, there is a melancholy proof of its effects even in our day, given by an American minister, the Rev. Timothy Flint.

"One general trait appears to me to characterise this region (Illinois) in a religious point of view. They are anxious to collect a great many people and preachers, and achieve — if the expression may be allowed—a great deal of religion at once, that they may be, by and by, exempt from its rules and duties, until the regular recurrence of the period for replenishing the exhausted stock. Hence, much appearance and scening, frequent meetings, spasms, cries, fallings, faintings—and what I imagine will be a new aspect of religious feeling to most of my readers — the religious laugh. Nothing is more common at these scenes than to see the more forward people indulging in what seemed to me an idiot and *spasmodic* laugh; and when I asked what it meant, I was told it was the '*holy laugh*.' Preposterous as the term may seem to my readers, 'holy laugh' is a phrase so familiar to me as to excite no surprise. But in these same regions, and among these same people, morals, genuine tenderness of heart, and capacity to be guided, either by reason, persuasion, or the uniform dictates of the Gospel, was an affecting desideratum."[1]

We will conclude by an instance of this powerful agent (the imagination) being pressed into the physician's service with good effect. During the

[1] Flint's Ten Years in the Valley of the Mississippi, pp. 238, 239.

siege of Breda, in 1625, the garrison was dreadfully afflicted with the scurvy; so useless was medical aid, and so desperate were the soldiers in consequence, that they resolved to give up the city to the enemy. This resolution came to the ears of the Prince of Orange: he immediately wrote addresses to the men, assuring them that he possessed remedies that were unknown to physicians, and that he would undertake their cure, provided they continued in their duty. Together with these addresses, he sent to the physicians small phials of coloured water, which the patients were assured to be of immense price, but of unspeakable virtue. Many, who declared that all former remedies had only made them worse, now recovered in a few days. A long and interesting account of this circumstance was drawn up by Vander Mye, one of the physicians, whose office was thus successfully usurped by the Prince of Orange.

The *practice* of a quack may be successful, but his theory will betray him, if he adopt or make one. Will it be believed, twenty years hence, that a man had made a fortune by selling pills to work out the following theory? [1]—"All disorders proceed from an impure state of the blood, which makes a sort of fur or incrustation inside the arteries and veins, and thus clogs up the circulation. Now, these pills either dissolve or scrape away the crust, and the circulation goes on right again."

Foote represents an empiric with a theory quite as reasonable, and incalculably more witty:—"Jaundice proceeds from many myriads of little flies, of a yellow color, which fly about the system: now, to cure this,

[1] Morrisoniana.

I make the patient take a certain quantity of the ova or eggs of spiders. These eggs, when taken into the stomach, by the warmth of that organ, vivify, and being vivified, of course they immediately proceed to catch the flies; thus the disease is cured, and I then send the patient down to the sea-side, to wash all the cobwebs out of the system."

But, to return to Animal Magnetism.

CHAPTER III.

MESMERISM.—CLAIRVOYANCE.

In the year 1825, the interest which this extraordinary agent had formerly excited was fast declining. There seemed, indeed, reason to believe that it would, like a fire deprived of fuel, go out of itself. The work of Deleuze, to which we have already alluded, failed to revive the sympathies of the public in favour of Magnetism, when a M. Foissac, once more introduced it to the notice of the Académie Royale de Médecine. He observed that the theory which had been published by Mesmer and D'Eslon had been long abandoned, that new results had been obtained, and new principles elicited since the report drawn up by Bailly had appeared, and that consequently, if the opinion of the Academy were to be regarded at all, it must again state that opinion under the altered circumstances of the case. The proposal to re-examine and re-report upon Animal Magnetism was not immediately entertained; however, after long and somewhat violent discussions, a committee was formed to consider the claims of the Magnetisers. Foissac wished to experiment on a certain somnambulist in the presence of the whole Academy, but this, for obvious reasons, was declined. On the 11th of October, in the year above-mentioned, it was agreed that MM. Bourdois de la Motte, Fouquier, Guenau de Mussy. Guersent, Itard, Leroux, Maic, Tillaye,

Laennec, D'Ouble, Majendie, and Husson, should form a Committee of Examination. Of these Leroux and Fouquier were professors in the medical faculty; Husson, Guersent, and De Mussy, principal physicians at the Hôtel Dieu; Marc, chief physician to Charles X., and Itard, the director of the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb. These gentlemen instituted a course of experiments which they continued for nearly six years, and at length, in the year 1831, nine of the Committee signed a report, which, though anything but decisive either way, was yet far more favorable to Animal Magnetism than that of 1784. It must, however, be admitted that the three members, whose opinion would be most esteemed throughout Europe, refused to sign the Report. These were Laennec, D'Ouble, and Majendie. We now proceed to note, first, the general facts which the Report admitted, and next, the particular conclusions to which its framers came.

They allowed,—

1. That the effects of Magnetism were null in all healthy persons, and in some invalids.

2. That they are but little apparent in others.

3. That they are often produced by ennui, monotony, and the power of the imagination.

4. That they are sometimes developed independently of these causes, and *very probably* by the effect of Magnetism alone.

Such were the general facts admitted by the Report, and this only after six years of patient investigation. A collection of cases was immediately published by M. Foissac, but as the first three heads were evidently foreign to the purpose, we shall merely notice

a few of those to which he draws our attention under the fourth head,—that is, those in which the power of Magnetism is admitted to be *very probable.*

Among these, the results were, in many cases, precisely the same as formerly under the treatment of M. d'Eslon; that is, the patient was affected in the same way without being magnetised, if he or she supposed Magnetic influence to be in operation. On the other hand, Magnetic treatment produced in many instances no crises, unless the patient were at the same time aware of its employment. The parties magnetised were almost always females, often subject to hysteric affections, highly excitable, and of a decidedly nervous temperament. The power of imagination may, therefore, in such cases be fairly deemed equal to produce the results witnessed; but the great question was, not whether the power of imagination could produce violent, and sometimes salutary effects on the human constitution, but whether the tacit will of one person could be made to act upon another; whether what was called "clairvoyance" could be produced in any case at all, and if so, how far magnetic influence was concerned in producing it. If these questions could be answered in the affirmative, it was highly probable that the connection between mind and matter would not remain much longer so inscrutable a mystery; the effects attributed in old times to Magic would appear no longer marvellous; and a step would have been taken in philosophy, mental as well as physical, so gigantic, that all the discoveries of the past would be absolutely as nothing in comparison of it. To these points, therefore, the existence of clairvoyance, and

the operation of the tacit will, the attention of the Commissioners was chiefly directed. A Madame C., who lived *in the same house with the Magnetiser*, was one of the persons, by experimenting upon whom this last point was to be proved. Somnambulism was produced in the usual way, and some of the Commissioners gave directions in writing to the Magnetiser indicating what actions they wished to see the patient perform; these were to be signified mentally to her, and without speech or gesture. One of these directions was,—go and sit on the stool before the piano,—instead of which, she rose and went to look at the clock. On being told that this was not what she was required to do, she went into another room, and on being again informed of her mistake, she came back and placed herself on her former seat. In short, every experiment with regard to the operation of the tacit will failed in this instance, and when a proof of clairvoyance was attempted by exhibiting to the somnambulist the back of a watch, she mistook the hour. Some other experiments were attended with similar results, and, when repeated with different patients, were equally unsuccessful. These disappointments induced the Commissioners to believe that some collusion must exist between the Magnetisers and those patients on whom their patients produced results so wonderful; they were even about to report accordingly, and terminate their investigations, when M. Dupotet came forward with an offer to satisfy all their doubt. The proof he proposed was his power to produce convulsive motions in any part of the body by merely pointing towards the part — and this even when out of the patient's sight. These

experiments failed; — convulsions were excited in parts to which M. Dupotet had not pointed, while those to which his finger was directed remained tranquil.

Similar experiments were subsequently made with the patients of a M. Berna and with precisely the same effect; but one symptom upon which this last-named Magnetiser laid great stress was his power to produce insensibility to pain or tickling by the mere action of his will: he, however, required that the pain inflicted should not exceed certain bounds which he rigorously fixed, and when by accident a needle was introduced a little further into the chin of his patient than he had stipulated, she gave evident token of sensation. It would seem, too, that the nervous system in this girl must have been naturally in a very inert state, inasmuch as previously to the operation of magnetism she was pricked *to the same extent* as M. Berna permitted under magnetic sleep, and even then declared that she did not feel it. This statement, however, she was subsequently induced to retract.

It was under the management of M. Berna that experiments were made upon patients in a state of clairvoyance. A woman of about thirty years of age was found by the Commissioners in the company of M. Berna; in their presence he bandaged her eyes, and then, after a few minutes, declared that she was in a state of somnambulism, and could answer any question proposed to her; these questions were to be of two kinds; first, such as were known to M. Berna, and secondly, such as were not known to him. Her answers were such as might be ex-

pected. She could tell how many persons were in the room; she could tell that something white and square was held behind her head, when M. Berna desired that a visiting-card should be held there. but when asked to say what was written upon the card, she proved entirely unable to tell. She could declare that a card from a pack was placed before her eyes, and, after many guessings, declared it to be the knave of clubs. M. Berna had desired that a card should be held up to her, and being asked if a court card should be taken, said, "as you please;" all this took place aloud; the Commissioners, however, substituted, without M. Berna's knowledge, a plain white card—so that the clairvoyance of this patient enabled her to detect in a plain white card the knave of clubs, and this not at one guess, but at many;—first, it was a card, then there was something represented upon it,—then it was a figure; the next guess made out a knave, then there was something black by the side of the knave, and, lastly, that something black took the definite shape of a club (trèfle). Such were the experiments made, and such the results obtained in the presence of the Commissioners. Now, if with these, we compare the results of Magnetism, when none but Magnetisers and believers were present, we shall find a difference marvellous indeed.

We subjoin one of the most remarkable, not only on account of the attention it attracted at the time, and because Mr. Colquhoun [1] lays great stress upon it, but on account also of the solution.

[1] Mr. Colquhoun translated into English the Report of the Academy, and published several other works on "Animal Magnetism."

Petronilla Leclerc, æt. 26, admitted into the Hospital of La Charité, in 1830, was placed under the care of M. Fouquier; she was magnetised, and all the phenomena of somnambulism, clairvoyance, &c., were produced in her. She had in her own the hand of another person, and exclaimed, "you have a headache." This was true, but M. Sebire (the Magnetiser) said, to try her, "You are mistaken:" "Well," she replied, "that is singular, I touched some person who had a headache, for I felt it." At another time the Magnetiser had retired, promising to return at half-past five o'clock in order to awaken her. He arrived before the appointed time. Leclerc remarked "that it was not yet half-past five;" he answered, "that he came before the time appointed because he had received a letter which required his immediate attention afterwards." "Yes," she rejoined, "it is that letter which you have in your pocket between a blue card and a yellow one." This was exactly the case. M. Sebire held a watch behind her head, asking her at the same time "what o'clock it was?" to which she answered, "six minutes past four:" here again she was right.

Here then was, as it appeared, a case of decided clairvoyance; unfortunately for Animal Magnetism no such success ever attended the experiments made before the Commissioners. Still more unfortunately this same Petronilla Leclerc died of consumption in the year 1833, in the Salpetriere, and repeatedly acknowledged that her somnambulism and her clairvoyance were alike fictitious; that Sebire and Fouquier and Georget had all been her dupes, and that one of her chief amusements had been to discuss with

another somnambulist (Brouillard) the deceptions which they had practised, and those which they were about to exercise. In the year 1831, *previous* to the confession of Leclerc, and *subsequent* to the wonderful experiments of which she was the subject, the Commissioners, of whom M. Fouquier was one, presented their report to the academy, a report to which Laennec, Majendie, and D'Ouble refused to set their names. This report concluded by the following propositions:—

"1. Contacts of thumbs, and movements termed passes are the means of relationship employed to transmit magnetic action from the Magnetiser to the magnetised.

"2. Magnetism acts on persons of different age and sex.

"3. Many effects appear to depend on Magnetism alone, and are not reproduced without it.

"4. The effects produced by Magnetism are varied; it agitates some, calms others; it generally causes acceleration of the pulse and respiration, slight convulsive movements, somnolency, and in a few cases, what is called somnambulism.

"5. The existence of peculiar characters proper to recognise in all cases the reality of a state of somnambulism has not been proved.

"6. It may however be inferred with certainty that this state exists when it gives rise to the development of new faculties, as clairvoyance and intuitive foresight, or when it produces great changes in the physiological condition of the individual, as insensibility, sudden increase of strength, as this effect cannot be attributed to any other cause.

"7. When the effects of Magnetism have been produced, there is no occasion on subsequent trials to have recourse to the passes, the look of the Magnetiser, his will alone, have the same influence.

"8. Changes more or less remarkable are effected in the perceptions and faculties of persons in whom somnambulism has been induced.

"9. We have seen two somnambulists distinguish with closed eyes objects placed before them. They have read words, estimated the difference of colors, the points on cards, &c.

"10. In two somnambulists we have met with the faculty of foreseeing acts of the organism to take place at periods more or less distinct. One announced the day, hour, and minute of the invasion and recurrence of an epileptic attack, the other foresaw the period of his cure. Their anticipations were realized.

"11. We have only seen in one instance a somnambulist who has described the symptoms of the diseases in three individuals presented to her.

"12. In order to establish justly the relations of Magnetism with Therapeutics, we must observe its effects on a great number of individuals, and have made many experiments on sick persons. This not having been done, the Commissioners can only say that they have seen too few cases to give a decided opinion.

"13. Considered as an agent of physiological phenomena, or of therapeutics, Magnetism should find a place in the circle of medical science, and, consequently, should be either practised, or its employment superintended, by a physician.

"14. The Commission could not verify, because it had not opportunity, the existence of any other faculties in somnambulism, but it communicates in its report facts sufficiently important to state, that in its opinion, the Academy ought to encourage researches in Animal Magnetism as a curious branch of Psychology and Natural History."

Such were the conclusions to which the Commissioners came. It is to be observed that these conclusions are of rather a negative character, some of them even expressly denying the positions of the Magnetisers, especially the fifth. M. Dubois who, though not one of the Commissioners, diligently attended the experiments, wrote, upon the appearance of the report, a critique on its conclusions; he observed that the prediction of an epileptic attack was anything but satisfactory, inasmuch, as no disease was more easily simulated; that no instances had occurred in which an attack of fever or inflammation, or, indeed, of any disease less dependant on the imagination, had been predicted; that the foresight of a cure was only exhibited in an already convalescent patient; that when a somnambulist was able to state the symptoms of disease under which the persons presented to her labored, they were but trifling symptoms which she mentioned, and that when she was pressed to state those of graver importance she failed, except when circumstances made it evident that she had received her information beforehand; that there was much trickery and collusion both on the part of the patients and the Magnetisers, a fact afterwards asserted to be fully proved; and that if six years' diligent investigation did not

present a sufficiency of cases to decide upon, it seemed hardly probable that the question could be decided at all.

More recent experiments would lead us to consider the effects produced by Mesmerism, and noticed in the report as exceedingly favorable, for while its efficacy as a therapeutic agent has been since proved by numberless cases in which the very supposition of collusion would be absurd; it has been also shown that its effects may be and are retarded or neutralised by the presence of persons whose *will* is hostile to its operation. This is exactly what a philosophic mind would be led to expect; if, by my will, I can produce certain effects on another person, and make my influence felt, even without any exercise of volition, by my mere presence; so, in like manner, I should necessarily expect that the will of another person present, even if unconsciously exerted, must, *according to its power*, be effective. In this case many adverse wills were at work, and in what way soever we account for the effects produced by Mesmerisers, more appears to have been done before the members of the French commission, than there was any reason to look for.

Even if it be contended that imagination is the sole agent, it could not have been called into operation under circumstances more disadvantageous. The persons, whose imagination was to be acted upon, were subjected to *public* experiment, knew that the reality of their cures, the integrity of their conduct, and the skill of their medical attendants, were all called in question, and it would be demanding no more than is due to Mesmerism, were its advo-

cates altogether to deny the inference drawn against them from any number of failures, much more from any number of impostures.

Petronilla Leclere was, undoubtedly, a cheat, so have been hundreds of others. The writer of these pages has proved imposture in the case of more than one pretended clairvoyant, but it would be very unphilosophical to say, with a London Journal, "We look upon Adolphe, Alexis, and the whole tribe of clairvoyants, as impostors. In all cases where there is no imposition, and there has been any positive success, the facts can be accounted for on ordinary principles, without the aid of Mesmerism." The influence which the very *presence* of persons disagreeable to the mesmerised patient, exerts upon him, as well mentally as physically, is thus described by Mr. Cattell, himself a Mesmeric practitioner, in a letter to the editor of the "Zoist:"—"The phenomena resulting from two or more mesmeric influences acting at one time upon the same patient, usually denominated cross-mesmerism, have been so little noticed,—and their appearance is so apt to create unnecessary apprehension where no real danger exists,—that the following cases, which have occurred in my practice during last year, may be found instructive. At all events, I trust they will be the means of directing attention to a class of phenomena which, perhaps, have been too much neglected, though I have reason to believe the notebooks of many Mesmerists could furnish cases much more intersting and difficult to manage. My attention was first directed to this subject, by observing the dislike which all my somnambules exhibited to

the presence of my friend Mr. N. At one time his entrance struck the patient dumb during the remainder of the *séance;* at another, destroyed the lucidity. Anything touched by him conveyed the same distress to them, and they never voluntarily allowed it to come in contact with them. A series of half-crowns placed upon a book,— one of which he had marked, were offered by me to the patients, who accepted all except that one which Mr. N. had touched. I found the same symptoms attend the presence of other individuals, though all believers in Mesmerism; and that invariably, so that a person whom one patient disliked, was sure, ever afterwards, to excite the same feelings in all the rest; and *vice versâ* if he were liked."

It is very easy to say all the facts are false, and all the reasonings fallacious, but if we are to try facts, we must try them according to the rules of evidence, and if we are to investigate a theory, we must proceed according to the principles which the theory propounds.

Hence, when the doctrine of "cross mesmerism" explains many failures, and at the same time elicits many important therapeutic facts, it is obviously unfair and unphilosophical to object to it, because it makes in favour of the science of whose system it makes a part. The temper of mind in which such an inquiry should be conducted, was perhaps never better displayed than by the conductors of the "Morning Post," who thus speak on the subject of Mesmerism, and of the distinguished physician to whom it owes so much:—

"Mesmerism has yet to be characterized. The

public at present know not how to esteem it. That it has been abused by those who pretended to explain or illustrate its mode of action is obvious ; but that it has neither been understood nor exposed by those who undertook the right of pronouncing upon its merit, is not to be denied. Proofs are wanting in both directions, but these must be sought in a different temper to that which has hitherto been displayed. To show that it is something more than a delusion would be an easy task, but to prove that it is anything like that which many of its advocates pretend would *perhaps* be an impossibility. It is now a riddle, but it has claims as such to the attention of the medical profession; and we do not like the feeling of prejudice a large number of practitioners think they are called upon to express towards it. The name of the first practical physician of this country gives countenance to the belief that mesmerism is not entirely based upon deception. The heavy sacrifices which Dr. Elliotson made rather than deny his opinions are conclusive as to the sincerity of his convictions; and we cannot but remember that to his acuteness the British public are indebted for the introduction of several of those reforms which have been universally adopted. Dr. Elliotson, therefore, had become a teacher, in the largest meaning of the word, when he undertook to instruct his profession with regard to that influence or power which is deno minated Mesmerism. He had shown his ability to judge, and his judgment had benefited the practice of his art. His capability and his right to decide on any question connected with the science he had improved, therefore, was established, so far as any

title of the kind possibly could be; but we must remember that when his convictions did not strictly accord with the belief of his profession, the services he had rendered and the station he had gained were in an instant forgotten. A greater injury or a more flagrant injustice was never, we think, perpetrated; and it is to prevent the repetition of similar transactions that we, on principle, decline to make party with persons who, members of the medical profession, show a disposition to oppose inquiry."

The Report, though read before the Academy and printed, was subsequently withdrawn from their Transactions, and was, as we have seen, signed by nine only of the Commissioners appointed. It gave, notwithstanding its defective character, a new stimulus to the study of Animal Magnetism; and now for the first time it began to attract a more decided attention in America. The person who introduced it into that country was a M. Poyen, who, descended from a respectable French colonial family, had been educated at Paris, with a view of practising medicine in his native island. While studying in that city, he states that he was cured of a dangerous and complicated nervous disease by Magnetic treatment.

A somnambulist lady, Mad. Villetard, magnetised by M. Chapelain, described her symptoms to him in a perfectly satisfactory manner, and pointed out to him the method of cure. From Paris, M. Poyen went to Guadaloupe and Martinique, in which islands he found many planters, to his great surprise, devoting themselves to the study and practice of Animal Magnetism; among these he mentions a Marquis Aymard de Jabrun. After residing in these islands

fourteen months he went to Massachusetts, where he found an uncle settled: he there studied the English language (which he certainly writes very well), and became a teacher of French and drawing. About this time, he states, that he was struck with a great admiration of the American character and institutions, and "thanked God for having once more carried him, against his private wishes and sympathies, across the ocean, to know the most perfect nation upon earth." He began to flatter America, to preach a crusade against negro slavery (rather an unpopular step in the land of liberty), and to write on theological subjects: finally, he resolved to teach "the most perfect nation upon earth" Animal Magnetism. M. Poyen's proceedings were, according to his own account, remarkably disinterested: he instructed gratis all who came to him; he did not practise for money; he courted, by all the means in his power, investigation; and, finally, succeeded in exciting a lively interest among the American people on behalf of Mesmerism. Two things are, however, very much in his disfavour; one, the extravagance of his narratives; and the other, the unfairness of his writings. He did, it is true, translate the Report of the French Academy, but he carefully suppressed the dissent of MM. Laennec, D'Ouble, and Majendie, a suppression which he repeated in his subsequent productions, and many similar instances may be brought against him. In spite, however, of this, he succeeded in establishing Animal Magnetism in New England, and in a very short time it spread to a very considerable extent, and began to attract as much attention in the United States as it had done in Europe.

There is, however, one thing to be noticed as characteristic of Mesmerism in America, which is the exaggerated nature of the experiments. The proceedings of MM. Sebire and Berna sink into utter insignificance when compared with those of M. Poyen and his friends. Concentrated spirits of ammonia, so strong that the unmagnetised person could not endure it for even a second, was held for two minutes and a half under the nose of a somnambulist without her feeling the slightest inconvenience.[1] The most terrific noises were unheard, and the most excruciating pain unperceived! These effects have, however, been produced elsewhere, and by other anæsthetic agents.

In producing clairvoyance, M. Poyen states himself to have been most successful. The person in whom this faculty was most perfectly developed was a Miss Cynthia Gleason, and the following is an instance related of the way in which she exercised it.[2] "At my suggestion," says M. Poyen, "a gentleman said that he should like to submit himself to the examination of the somnambulist for the state of his health. In consequence, he seated himself by her, she took hold of his arm, and touched the pulse. After expressing herself about the state of the pulse, she added, 'I do not think this gentleman is very sick. I do not see anything much out of order in him.' — 'Look at me internally.' — 'I was doing so.' — 'How is my stomach — large?' — 'It is pretty good; nothing ails it.' Then she indicated with her hand the size of the stomach. — 'How does it look? what is its color?' — 'Red.' — 'Is it very red?' — 'Not very, about like a blush-rose.' —

[1] Prog. of An. Mag. in New England, p. 71. [2] Ib. p. 83.

'Look at the intestine next to the stomach.'—'It is well.'—'How does it look internally? Is it smooth or rough?'—'It is rather rough; I see wrinkles, and a great many small edges as in a grater.'" This description," adds M. Poyen, "of the intestine duodenum, coming from a person so entirely ignorant of anatomy, is certainly striking. It is impossible to use a more happy comparison than that of a grater, to express the appearance of the numerous asperities or villosities that exist in the internal coat of the intestine. "The patient continued his questions, 'How are my lungs?'—'They are sound, yet I see in them two or three small pipes, filled up with a frothy-white yellowish matter, that ought to make you cough sometimes.'—'It is so in everybody.'—'Not in everybody who is well.'—'How is my heart?'—'Large.'—'How much does it weigh?'—'I should think about one pound.'—'Look at my liver, how is it?'—'Your liver is dark-coloured, darker than it ought to be; but I do not see anything out of order in it, except three or four white spots like water-blisters.' This gentleman said that he had been for some time past affected with a disease of the liver, but was then getting rid of it." Shortly after this Miss Gleason awoke, and was found not to have preserved the slightest recollection of anything that had transpired, and when questioned on anatomical subjects, she seemed to be in a state of very remarkable ignorance,[1] insomuch that she stated her idea that the cavity of the chest was filled with blood, and that the heart floated about in it like a ball, that there was but one passage for the food and the air into that

[1] Prog. An. Mag., p. 146.

cavity, and that the pipe which conveyed both lay straight along the chest. M. Poyen observes, and with no small reason, that "the most remarkable of Miss Gleason's faculties during the state of somnambulism is that of discerning the symptoms of diseases, and prescribing appropriate remedies for them. This seems to be a natural propensity, an instinctive disposition in her, whether she has been directed by the Magnetiser to do so or not." Nor was it necessary that the patient should be present. In one instance, Miss Gleason described the condition, and prescribed for the disease of an absent person, and in one instance was enabled to do as much by having a lock of hair from the person whom she was desired to examine presented to her.—"I never," says Dr. Poyen, "directed Miss Gleason but once to examine a patient *at a distance.* As the result of this examination was altogether extraordinary, I will briefly relate it. "One evening, during my residence at Pawtucket, in the month of December, 1836, I called, on a friendly visit, at the house of Samuel Lord, Esq., who felt a lively interest in Animal Magnetism. Contrary to my expectation, I found Miss Gleason there; she had been invited by Mr. L. to spend the evening with his family. I put her into the magnetic sleep; and, to try her clairvoyance at a distance, I requested her to go to Dr. Manchester's house, distant three-quarters of a mile, and to tell me what she saw there. I requested her also to say who was sick in the house. After describing several particulars which she pretended to see in the lower parlor, she walked up stairs, and named the persons she saw in one of the front rooms. After a moment of consider-

able attention, she said she saw a little boy sleeping in his cradle, and in very good health; that there was another child whom she had never seen before, a pretty little girl, lying on her mother's lap, and now in a state of high fever, caused by a severe cold settled all over her; that this child coughed a little and felt a great oppression towards the upper part of her chest; that her throat began to feel sore; that she had already taken some medicine, some kind of white powder; that she (Miss G.) thought it was a salt, and her parents were now talking about giving her a sweat. [It was at that moment nine o'clock by our watches.] She added that it would be necessary to apply prompt and energetic remedies to stop the fever; that if it were not immediately stopped, it would very soon turn into a scarlet fever, and that the child would then be in great danger. After the examination was over, I went to Dr. Manchester's house, and inquired very particularly about the disease of the child; everything stated by Miss G. was correct, not only concerning the symptoms, but also the medicine the child had taken, and the talking about giving her a sweat at the very time I have above mentioned. The treatment prescribed by the somnambulist was not applied, the fever assumed the scarlet type on the next morning, and three days afterwards the child died. Among those who may testify to the truth of the above statement, I will refer to Samuel Lord and John Street, Esqrs., and Mr. Bates, an English gentleman, all resident at Pawtucket."[1]

This is as wonderful as any of the experiments of

[1] Prog. An. Magn., p. 150.

Alexis, but there are yet stranger things than these to be related.[1]

"So sure is Miss G.'s power of diagnostics, so profound is the impression made on her by the diseases she has examined, that if a single lock of the hair of one of *her patients* is presented to her, even three or four weeks after the examination has taken place, she will describe the disease as though the person were present, and even find out *who* he is, and *where* he is, merely by holding that hair against her epigastrium, and feeling it with her fingers. She has been frequently submitted to this test by Mr. A. Wright, whose certificate has already been presented, and by myself, in the presence of a great many witnesses. In making such experiments, we are careful not to say a word that might lead her to give correct answers; we are also cautious not to tell her before she is put to sleep, what we mean to have her do, while in a state of somnambulism. The results of these experiments have been almost invariably successful, and sometimes perfectly astonishing; she has also frequently been able, when in a state of high lucidity, to describe accurately a disease by holding in her hand some hair belonging to a person whom she had never seen nor heard of before. I might offer a number of such instances under my personal observation, but I prefer to quote one out of Mr. Wright's practice, as no one will suspect collusion or deception in the case. Dr. Huntingdon, of Lowell, having expressed to Mr. W. his desire to have a patient of his examined by Miss G., while in somnambulism, Mr. W. requested him to procure some

[1] Prog. An. Magn., p. 152.

hair from the person, and send it carefully folded in a paper to his house, where Miss Gleason was on a visit for a few days. The patient is a very respectable lady, of Lowell, and an entire stranger to Miss G. Mr. Wright having put the somnambulist asleep, began to converse with her about a Mrs. C., whom she had examined some weeks past, when she was fairly engaged in talking about that lady's case. Mr. W. handed her the paper containing the hair, and requested her to see what was in it. She immediately applied it to her forehead, and, after some moments of attention, said it was hair. She then took the lock out of the paper, and, having carefully felt it, said it was not Mrs. C.'s hair; that the hair belonged to a person who was an entire stranger to her, and *who lived only within half-a-mile;* whereas, Mrs. C. lived three miles. That, however, the person who owned the hair was a lady; that she was not well by any means; that she had been out of health for several years; that the symptoms of her disease were a great wakefulness, head-ache, pain in her right side, proceeding from an affection of the liver, poorness of blood, and general debility, which prevented her from walking. This description was remarkably accurate.

"After finishing her examination, Mr. W. took the hair back from Miss Gleason's hands, and awoke her. Not a word was told her, when in the wakeful state, about the case she had been examining. On the evening of the next day, when she was again in a magnetic sleep, the lady whose hair she had examined was brought to her. She took the lady's arm and said, 'This is not a new thing to me.

I have already seen this person; I have examined her.' 'No you are mistaken, you never saw me before.'—'I know better, I saw you last night through your hair, and I have nothing more to tell concerning your case.' She then, at the request of the lady, repeated what she had said on the night previous. The patient and her friends who were present declared that the description was very correct. Every one in the room was in the greatest amazement." No wonder. It need scarcely be stated that the tacit will of M. Poyen was completely understood and completely obeyed by Miss Gleason; he had but to offer her a tumbler of water, willing at the same time that she should receive it as wine, and to her mind it at once became so; another effort of volition on his part, and it became whatever other liquid or even solid he chose. In this manner was Mesmerism established in New England. In these cases there was probably a little enthusiasm, and in the relation of them not a little exaggeration, still the names of men whose character is unexceptionable, must be a guarantee that there *was* an exhibition of unusual power and lucidity in Miss Gleason, nor have we any right to refuse our credence to the main facts, facts which, as we shall presently see, are contradictory neither to philosophy nor experience. Several writers, as usual, opposed its progress, some by argument and some by ridicule, and it is now said again to be on the decline.

In the meantime it was not only in France and America that the renewed impetus given to Animal Magnetism by the Report of the Academy was felt; it received in England still more powerful support.

M. Dupotet, whose failure with the French Commissioners has been already mentioned, came over to London, in the year 1837, and among those who were satisfied with his experiments was Dr. Elliotson,—a man, whose extensive acquirements and high character, together with the sacrifices which he is known to have made for this theory, totally preclude the idea of any collusion on his part.

The experiments made by Dr. Elliotson at the Hospital attached to University College, derived a high degree of importance from the fact that many of the most eminent individuals in the kingdom were present to witness them. These experiments were principally performed on two Irish girls, named Elizabeth and Jane O'Key, and Dr. Elliotson still practises in the same way. The results are worthy of note, because this instance might, were it not for what has been said before concerning opposing wills and the effect of imagination, be pronounced an "experimentum crucis:" to bring a charge of imposture against Dr. Elliotson would be worse than ridiculous, and at the same time he is, it must be allowed, well calculated to decide, both from learning and talent. His opinion, however, in favor of Mesmerism has to be balanced against many of the first medical practitioners of the day, who, though present at the same experiments, have come to a different conclusion. A very brief account of the effects produced on the O'Keys is all that we can give. That they appeared to fall into sleep at the passes made by Dr. Elliotson; that they woke in a kind of delirium, during which their manners were widely different from those which characterised them in their natural state; that certain

appearances were observed which led Dr. Elliotson and many of the spectators to believe that vision was exercised by the back of the hand, and that the power was absolutely transferred from the eye to that part ; all this must be granted, but when examined and experimented upon by a declared disbeliever, Mr. Wakley, the results were no longer successful.

The two girls were brought by Dr. Elliotson to the house of Mr. Wakley, on Thursday, Aug. 18, 1838, and a course of experiments was then gone through with mesmerised water and nickel, that metal having, as the Magnetiser states, a very extraordinary power on the human frame. But, as in the case of M. d'Eslon's patients, who fell into convulsions under unmagnetised trees, so in the present instance, the effects of Magnetism were produced when that agent was not employed, and were absent when it was, and this to so great an extent, that Dr. Elliotson candidly acknowledged "that the thing was most extraordinary, that he could not explain how it had occurred, but that he did not doubt of a satisfactory solution being found for the apparent anomaly."

On the other hand it must be again remarked that here an opposing will, and a strong will, too, was at work—that the report was drawn up by Mr. Wakley himself, and that however much he may have endeavoured to act with perfect fairness, his own determined *animus* against Mesmerism is manifest in every line of his report. It is probable that no experiments of the kind will ever have a satisfactory result.

Mr. Leeson, also a disbeliever, made similar at-

tempts to verify the reports of Magnetisers, but with no better success; and so strong was the feeling excited in the minds of the managers of University College against Mesmerism, that Dr. Elliotson felt himself under the necessity, either of renouncing it, or of resigning the appointment which he held there. He chose, as D'Eslon had done before him, the latter alternative.

CHAPTER IV.

CLAIRVOYANCE—*continued.*

The question before us is, what is there contrary to philosophy and experience in the narratives which we have just seen? Is clairvoyance a credible thing or not? and we shall be greatly aided in coming to a sound decision on this subject by investigating those cases in which similar effects have been produced by other agency than that of Mesmerism.

M. Reichenbach, in experimenting therapeutically with ordinary magnetism, observed similar results. Speaking of certain sensations, he says: "Healthy sensitive subjects observe nothing farther than these and experience no inconvenience from the approach of magnets; but the diseased, or sensitive subjects, experience widely different ones, often very disagreeable, and which occasionally give rise to fainting, to attacks of catalepsy, or to spasms so violent that they might possibly endanger life. In such cases, which generally include somnambulists, there occurs an extraordinary acuteness of the senses; smell and taste, for example, become astonishingly delicate and acute; many kinds of food are rendered intolerable, and the perfumes, most agreeable at other times, offensive. The patients hear and understand what is spoken three or four rooms off, and their vision is often so irritable, that, on the one hand they cannot endure the sun's light, or that of a fire; while, on the other, they

are able, in very dark rooms, to distinguish not only the outlines, but the colours of objects, where healthy people cannot distinguish anything at all. Up to this point, however strange the phenomena, there is nothing which may not easily be conceived, since animals and men differ very much in the acuteness of the senses, as is daily experienced.

M. Reichenbach magnetised water as Mesmer and others mesmerized it, and it was easily distinguished by his patients from that which had not been subjected to the same process. He says, in his researches on Magnetism: "that although strongly prejudiced against the mesmeric idea of magnetised water being recognisable, he was yet compelled to admit what he saw daily, that his patient could easily distinguish a glass of water, along which a magnet, unknown to her, had been drawn, from many others; and this without failure or hesitation. He found it impossible to oppose a fact like this by arguments; but when he saw the same result in many other patients he ceased to struggle against that which, whether he understood it or not, was obviously a fact. He then perceived that it was more rational to admit the fact, and to wait with patience for the explanation."

Upon this fact, Dr. Gregory makes the following comment:—

"Here, then, in an investigation conducted, according to the most careful principles of physical research, we find, among other strange facts, one which hitherto had only been observed by Mesmerists, and which had been most unsparingly ridiculed for no other reason than that it appeared to those

who laughed at it to be absurd, impossible, and inexplicable. It is still as inexplicable as ever, but I do not think we can rationally doubt the fact; and I would take this opportunity of pointing out, as I have formerly done elsewhere, that in matters of observation, especially when new, the only question is this—'Is it true?' and not, 'Is it possible?' or 'Is it not absurd.' We cannot say what is possible, and *no fact can be absurd.* That we cannot explain it is only what might be expected, if we consider that multiplied observations are necessary before we can properly attempt to trace those general laws which we often call explanations, when they are only statements of the fact in a new form. Newton's law of gravitation does not explain the facts; it only aids our comprehension of them. I repeat, that we have here one of the most ridiculed facts of Mesmerism established, independent of Mesmerism, by simple observation; and this ought to teach caution to those who denounce the whole of Mesmerism as imposture."

Again, with regard to introvision, there are instances on record of its performance without Mesmerism some years ago.

"A communication, at a meeting of the Academy of Sciences at Paris, was made by M. Eseltze, relative to some experiments with the electro-galvanic light obtained by Bunsen's apparatus. The writer states that he causes this light to enter a dark room through an opening in a screen or shutter, and then, with the aid of powerful reflectors, is able to distinguish the internal parts of the human body. The veins, the arteries, the circulation of the blood, and the action

of the nerves, are, he says, seen by him with perfect distinctness; and if the light be directed towards the region of the heart, he is enabled to study all the mechanism of that important organ, as if it were placed before him under a glass. The author even asserts that he has ascertained the existence of tubercles in the lungs of a consumptive patient, and gives a drawing of them as they appeared. On rubbing the skin with a little olive oil the transparency was augmented, and he was enabled to follow the process of digestion."

Nor it is merely in our own day, or since the era of Mesmer, that such wonders have been observed. Valentine Greatrakes performed cures by unconscious Mesmerism, and Clairvoyance was exhibited by means of crystals and dark fluids.

In Oken's "Journal of Curiosities," there is the history of a Portuguese lady, whose name was Pedegache; she had a faculty similar to that of the Spanish Zahuris, and was much talked of all over Europe at the time. This extraordinary woman is said to have possessed the faculty of seeing into the human body, and also down into the depths of the earth. Père Lebrun says she had "true lynx-eyes," and to confirm it, he mentions, that once when the King of Portugal required water for a building he was constructing, she discovered several springs, merely by looking on the ground, though the men had dug for them in vain. The king was present when this occurred, and he in return gave her a pension and the decoration of the order of Christ for whomsoever she might marry. Père Lebrun observes, that it was a pity she did not understand the medical art,

from her power of seeing into the body as well as the earth; but she could only exercise these gifts when fasting. She could see how the blood moved, how digestion was performed, and the formation of the nutricious juices. She could discern the different parts of the body, with their respective operations, and find out diseases which escaped the observation of the most skilful physicians, who, without injustice, appeared blind when compared with her, so that people felt much more inclined to consult her than them.

Oken finds the explanation of this lady's extraordinary gift, and also that of the Zahuris in a heightening of the "central sense," as in somnambulists. Those who are in a magnetic sleep can tell the exact time as marked upon a clock in a distant place. It is all the same to a clairvoyant whether the clock be separated from him by a wall, air, or earth; and it is no more wonderful to perceive things which are buried, than to distinguish objects removed from the range of vision in a different way. This is true of things which are in live bodies, the intestines, worms, &c. The earth, walls, the air, or fleshy bodies, are in this view similar media, by which the central sense acts as that of the eye through glass or through the air, both which appear to act as conductors to this sense, rather than to obstruct it. If our eye is affected by colors at the distance of some miles, it is because its organization makes it sensible of all, even the slightest workings of our system. And, if another organ of our body, for example, a finger, were placed in an equally susceptible condition, owing to a sensitive refinement of structure, why, says Oken, should

it not also acknowledge the influence of more remote bodies? There is not a body in the world, be it but a particle of dust, which does not act upon all other bodies, nor a change in one which does not involve an alteration in all. Every atom of which the material world is made up, gravitates towards another, and each individual atom attracts, and also is attracted, by the mass; so that if only a single atom is deranged, every force in creation is changed from its direction. Our eyes and our fingers are as different thermometers to each other; one shows the least change of temperature by large spaces, another by small, while a third will give no sign of being affected as yet. Lay a magnet on a table, and it will feel the iron which is beneath the table, nay, it feels the iron which is at the north pole, deep under the earth; the substances between are as if they were not, for the power that influences it has its counterpart only in the iron.

We see with our eyes, but cannot hear with them; we taste with our tongue, but cannot see with it, because, in the variety of the physical, it is like which allies itself with like. When in a crowd we behold but the persons we seek, the rest are present but we see them not: wherever the attention is directed it will go, without being stayed by any intervening object. And as in our spirit, so is it in Nature, a spirit also. If we have a pain in our toe, our brain is sensible of the pain, but does not perceive the sensation coming through the body. One natural body is acted upon by a remote one, but is not aware of the intervening bodies through which the action passes by which it is affected. And man

is also a natural body,—and his *iron* is any object on which his attention is fixed, or that is adapted to his organization. To penetrate into the earth or into human bodies by vision, or, more properly, to *feel* into them, is, in fact, nothing miraculous or preternatural, though uncommon. Those who possess such a power must be regarded as very fine electrometers, photometers, or thermometers, or magnetometers, or, in short, polarimeters.

What then *is* this powerful yet occult influence? Let us hear some clairvoyant patients, and they give a very interesting *material* account of it:—

"Upon this subject," says Mr. Cattell, "I have heard the following remarks by many clairvoyants. From the *active brain* there emanates a fluid which rests over the head and brow like a halo or cloud of light; varying in intensity in different persons, according to their respective mesmeric powers. Its color is blue, like the electric spark, of every shade, from the lightest presented by the prism, to a deep violet; it extends, more or less, all over the body, but is most visible at the extremities, being emitted from the tips of the fingers in mesmerising, like brilliant stars or spangles. When this blue fluid is clear, the patient becomes clairvoyant, and is lucid in proportion to its brilliancy and intensity. The deep violet is very intense, powerful, and compulsory in its operation, and particularly effective in organic disease, paralysis, contractions, and the like. It is a curious fact, that it is the blue ray of the spectrum that is magnetic, and this is most intense in its violet hue. The pale blue fluid is quiet, soothing, and exceedingly beneficial, where great power is neither

necessary nor advisable, in nervous and internal disorders.

"The fluid of the majority of mankind is more or less thick, heavy and dull; and the presence of intense thinkers is likely to disturb or cloud the lucidity of a susceptible patient. Occasionally, the mesmeric halo is thickly studded with stars; here there exists a powerful will combined, according to the clearness of the fluid, with the capability of producing great lucidity. Sometimes the mesmeriser's brow appears clothed with this halo to the patient before the sleep takes place; and in the case of Miss Martineau it surrounded everything in the room. One of my patients usually saw it after being mesmerised for a few minutes, and described it as being like the flame that appears round the head of a newly ignited lucifer—but clearer and softer, about three inches in breadth and resting over my head and shoulders. It was much more brilliant in the dark, but never occurred except the patient held my hands. Clairvoyants state that this fluid is matter, and the mesmeriser should, as he values his own health and that of other patients, carefully shake and wash his hands after each operation.

"Nor is this luminousness confined to the human species. To a clairvoyant the feline tribe appears vividly luminous, especially the domestic cat and the tiger; the dog presents it in dull, lambent patches, and the magnetic emanations from the horse are of a more intense character than those from the cow."

A similar account is given by a patient of Mr. Barth's, a Miss Newman.

"She described the mesmeric influence as being

bright like light: that there were two sorts in every body, the '*silver*,' and the '*blue stuff*:' that 'the silver was all over the body, but most of it over the brain, the blue only over the brain, outside or beyond the silver: that sometimes my '*blue stuff*' seemed like a cloud three or four feet above my head: that, when I made passes the silver came out of my hands and fingers and fell like stars; and she always called it '*the silver stars*:' that it was the silver which cured people, and the blue seldom did good and was generally hurtful: that when I fixed her to the floor, or her hand to the table, the blue came out of me and did it: that all people had the silver and the blue, and when they lost their stars they became ill: that everybody has some stars, and when all their stars are gone they die: that blue and silver came from my eyes when I mesmerised, as well as from my fingers: that if I had mesmerised much she always knew it by observing that I had not my customary quantity of silver. She could see the blue and silver in all persons; and the stars fall from them if they mesmerised, but the shade of the influence in different persons differed. Some had a paler blue than I had, and some person's stars looked red or dirty. She did not like to see any one whose stars were dull or dirty make passes over me, lest I might receive harm from them. She also saw another kind of emanation when drawing-off passes were made over persons who were not in health. She first perceived it as proceeding from herself when I was drawing away some pain from her by making passes to the feet and throwing my hands off right and left towards the carpet. She said,

'When you do that I see stuff fall off your hands on the carpet like mud.' She always called it 'dirty stuff' or 'dirt:' 'The dirt you are taking out of Mr. —— is not like my dirt; his is of a drab colour, mine looks more like mud:' 'I know that it is not real dirt; but it looks exactly like it. When you throw it on the carpet, it spreads about and goes away. Dirt would do some people harm if you throw it on them.'

"There is not anything," says Mr. Barth, "in these declarations inconsistent with reason. She neither had nor needed prompting: the statements were spontaneously made in the first instance, and, whenever questioned in her sleep-waking respecting the subject, she was always consistent in confirming her first statement by her present perceptions and declarations. I am now in the habit of mesmerising two clairvoyants who see similar emanations; excepting that one can only see the influence which proceeds from me. I also am acquainted with a lady who has a subject that is occasionally clairvoyant and gives a similar description of the influence to that furnished by Miss Newman, seeing *silver* and *blue*, and describing the silver as being the healing and curative influence. Nearly all mesmerisers concur in the main facts of a luminous emanation proceeding from their fingers being seen by their sleep-wakers; and of some persons who can in a darkened chamber see this emanation even in their normal state; also that the luminosity contains two or more colors, and that the color and intensity differ in different individuals."

We are not bound to take these theories, nor, in-

deed, accept the correctness of the sensations or perceptions themselves; but they are at all events both curious and interesting, and bear a strong resemblance to many things noted by those who have paid attention to the atomic theory of which so much has been said in these volumes.

The opinion of Dr. Elliotson on such a subject is very important, and he expresses it thus:—

"The existence of a mesmeric fluid is pure hypothesis. The phenomena may depend upon a peculiar matter, or upon a peculiar state of some matter which is the source of other phenomena of nature. I think it best always to speak of phenomena only, and to say power, property, or force, which gives rise to them. We have no proof of a nervous fluid, an electric fluid, a soul, &c. The respective phenomena of Mesmerism, electricity, heat, life common to vegetables and animals, and the mental phenomena of intellect, feeling, and will of the animal kingdom, may result from properties of ordinary matter peculiarly circumstanced, and, in the case of living beings, peculiarly composed, organized, and circumstanced, in regard to external circumstances, or may depend upon a peculiar matter in ordinary matter; but we see them only as phenomena of ordinary matter, and the peculiar matter is imaginary only. As to what clairvoyants say, they may say what they like on matters where there is no means of ascertaining whether they are right or wrong. The phenomena of light seem to depend upon the vibrations of some matter: but what this is, and whether the same holds good of the other phenomena of heat, electricity, gravitation, life, mind, in various

circumstances, we know not. We have no right to speak of these but as the result of conditions of common matter.

"I know no reason for believing that particular persons are disposed to bring out particular phenomena in patients. This affair, as far as I have observed, depends upon the patient: and I have looked rigorously into the subject. Inferences are too often drawn in Mesmerism, as in medicine, from imperfectly investigating and from too few occurrences. The declarations of mesmerised patients thought to be clairvoyant upon these matters is not worth a moment's consideration. I am satisfied of the truth of clairvoyance—of an occult power of foreknowing changes in the patient's own health that are not cognizable to others; of knowing things distant and things past; and sometimes, though rarely, events to come. But I am sure that most clairvoyants imagine much, speak the impressions of their natural state or of those about them, and may be led to any fancy. Some talk Swedenborgianism: some Roman Catholicism: some Calvinism: some Deism: some Atheism: some prescribe homœopathy, some allopathy. Cerebral sympathy—a fact totally unknown to the medical world, is continually mistaken for clairvoyance, and the opinions of patients may thus be sympathetically those of their mesmerisers. They will deceive from vanity or love of money or even of fun. Many patients pretend to the power who have it not at all, and those really possessed of it in some cases are not aware of it."

The only real difficulties with regard to the reception of Mesmerism as a *whole*, are those which attend

the phenomena of clairvoyance, nor are these so great as they are usually supposed to be. If I may, by means of one fluid (light) be made sensible of that which takes place in a room separated from me by a partition of glass, and I call this sight—by the vibration of another fluid (air)—of that which takes place in a room separated from me by a partition of wood, and I call this hearing,—why may I not attain a similar knowledge through the action of a third fluid, and call it clairvoyance?

The interposition of solid bodies is no necessary impediment, as we have seen, in the cases already adduced. Distance is no hindrance, as we see daily by the action of the electric telegraph; and however wonderful, therefore, may be those cases of clairvoyance denominated "*mental* travelling," there is nothing which need strike us as in any high degree improbable. Introvision is still less so, and the only cases which require any strong effort of faith are those in which predictions are made concerning the future, or in which a person, previously ignorant, becomes suddenly versed in languages, or enabled to talk technically on scientific subjects. But if from these we subtract cases of absolute imposture—and these it must be admitted are not a few—the remainder will be ranged under three heads. First, it will be found that there are patients in the mesmeric state whose faculties are so much sharpened that they are enabled to judge of probabilities much more accurately than when in their normal condition, and may be reasonably supposed able to predict with some degree of accuracy events occurring to such well known rules, as the crises of disease; and

instances of these last are the usual subjects of mesmeric predictions.

Secondly, instances of persons who have heard scientific subjects discussed, and not understanding them at the time, have forgotten all about them; the sounds then heard, and not understood, may, in the mesmeric state, rush back on the memory and be accurately repeated; such was the case with the servant-girl of whom Coleridge speaks, and who astonished a whole household by her sleep-walking recitations of rabbinical Hebrew. Other instances may occur in which knowledge, once possessed and digested, has lain for many years dormant, or, as we say, has been *forgotten;* but when the mesmeric state is induced, it once more claims its place in the catalogue of remembered things.

Thirdly, cases in which thought may be actually transmitted from mind to mind, without the intervention of speech. We know too little of the inner life and nature of man's spirit to be able to theorize on a subject so difficult as this, but the tenor of experiment induces us to believe in its possibility.

If these three classes of clairvoyance be carefully considered, they will be found to contain nearly, if not the whole of those cases which appear at first superhuman; and as the records of other experiments than those of Mesmerism exhibit the same phenomena, it is surely unjust and unphilosophical to deny their existence, when they occur in the course of mesmeric practice. The opinions of those who refer all the wonders of which we have spoken to Satanic influence, prove that they must surely have very unorthodox views of Satan's character and purpose, if they suppose him lending himself to good

men, and employing his power to cure disease and alleviate suffering.

A work bearing such a title as the Cradle of Science and History, would obviously be incomplete if all notice were omitted in it of the medical system, called Homœopathy. Accepted as true by many persons, not only of integrity, but also of philosophic minds and attainments, it deserves at least respectful attention, and indeed the time seems to be now come when it is likely to receive it. The notice given of Homœopathy here, as an infant science, must be very brief, more so, indeed, than the writer would willingly have it, but our limits will allow but of little expatiation.

Hahnemann, the founder of the system, was a German physician, born at Meissen, in Upper Saxony, in the year 1775. It will be unnecessary to detail the events of his life. Suffice it to say that in the year 1790, while engaged in translating the works of Cullen, he was so struck with the contradictory statements made by that writer as to the effects of Peruvian bark, that he determined to make experiment of it on himself. The first dose produced symptoms so similar to those of intermittent fever, that the resemblance of those symptoms to that malady strongly arrested his attention; and the prosecution of the experiment at length revealed to him the law which has since become the foundation of Homœopathy. The first step in this new field of inquiry being made, he next directed his awakened mind to the investigation of other medical substances, and, after laborious, painful, and protracted experiments, satisfied himself that he had discovered a

curative process more simple, certain, and complete than any previously known, and at the same time less injurious to health.

Thus convinced, Hahnemann pursued his researches to the doses usually administered; and, taking experiment for his guide in this case, as he had done before, to ascertain the properties of medicines, he found the effects required were produced by much smaller than the usual quantities, and these he continued to reduce till he finally convinced himself that the minutest portion of medicine, scientifically prepared, was best adapted to a safe and effectual cure, whilst it spared the sufferings and disgust consequent upon large doses.

Although, however, Hahnemann was prompt to observe, he was not rash to promulgate. It was not until 1796, six years after his discovery, that he considered his experiments sufficiently matured to be submitted to the public; and, even then, a small part only of his system was explained in one of the medical periodicals of the day.

After his establishment in Leipsic, in 1812, Hahnemann delivered a course of lectures on his system. His students, although few in number, were inspired with an enthusiastic zeal to follow up the discovery of their master; and it was by the aid of experiments to which they devoted themselves, that the world is indebted for much of the information which fills the pages of the "Materia Medica."

Hahnemann now saw himself compelled either to give up his practice as a physician, or to forego his superintendence of the preparation of his medicaments; and, as it was upon the purity of the latter,

and the care with which they were prepared, that the successful application of his discovery, and his own reputation depended,—he publicly announced his resolution to relinquish his practice.

At the present time Homœopathy, for such was the name given to the new system, is widely and increasingly practised in England, and we proceed, therefore, as is no more than due to its claims, to state the theory of those who have been supposed best able to understand it. This is principally contained in three principles;—First. That "like cures like, similia similibus curantur," that is, that a drug which in a *healthy* person produces symptoms resembling those of any disease, will in a person affected with that disease effect a cure.

Secondly. That medicine in order to be effectual in the highest degree should be minutely subdivided, and as those medicines which are exceedingly divisible in themselves, quickly and powerfully permeate the whole system—such, for instance, as mercury; so, in order to render any other drug equally effective, it requires only to be subjected to an equally minute subdivision, that by such process medicine acts not on the stomach only or chiefly, and *mediately* on the constitution, but pervades all the minute pores of the body, and exerts its *immediate* influence over the whole frame. The atomic theory is again brought before the mind, and the system, whether right or wrong, cannot be denied a philosophical consistency.

The third peculiarity of Homœopathy results from the second, and consists in the smallness of the doses administered. Medicines so triturated as to be capable of thus acting upon the whole system, at

once so certainly and so energetically cannot evidently be given in the same doses as in a gross and crude state, when they frequently pass away without having had an opportunity of acting in the way desired.

Two illustrations of the correctness and value of these two principles may be sufficient in this place. One is the well known fact that a much larger amount of alcohol may be taken in the form of ordinary undiluted spirit without producing intoxication than can be swallowed with impunity when considerably diluted with water. Another is the equally well known fact that a considerable quantity of arsenic has been introduced into the human stomach, and so wrapped up and enveloped when there by unctuous matter as to be withdrawn without producing any specific irritation

The correctness of the first principle rests on other grounds. Of *the ultimate nature of disease* itself, say the Homœopathists, we know nothing—all we can ascertain is that *something* is wrong and Nature is at work to rectify the evil, to throw off the peccant matter, to restore the equilibrium. Her work is known by what are called *the symptoms* of the disease—these are favourable to the patient, and the object of the physician should be to aid the work of Nature as much as he can. Hahnemann himself declared that *no* drug had any curative power; but that the curative power resided only in the energies (the *vis medicatrix*) of Nature. If he found certain symptoms follow the use of any medicine in a healthy person, he argued thus—If I have a patient in whose case Nature is acting in the same way, I may aid

her efforts by the use of such a drug, and this principle was the primary one on which Homœopathy as a system was built. The writer of these pages is not contending for the correctness of every assertion made by the professors of Homœopathy, he has seen many instances in which, like Mesmerism, it has been productive of wonderfully successful results, and while such has been his experience of its practice he sees nothing unphilosophical in its theory.

BOOK IV.

Science.

(Continued.)

CHAPTER I.

PNEUMATOLOGY.

The subject of the present book will lead us to the consideration of Metaphysical Science in its infancy; we shall trace it through much refined and much vulgar superstition, according as the age was coarse or polished, and through much *rational* and much *irrational* scepticism, according as the philosophy of the day tended towards materialism or its opposite.

Pneumatology may be defined to be that science which treats of spiritual essences — their powers, natures, and histories — and it differs from metaphysics, inasmuch as the latter term is chiefly applied to a philosophical investigation of the *human* intellect, its nature, and capacities. That matter is not necessary to existence, but that there are beings entirely independent of it, has been the opinion of the philosophical student from time immemorial, and though it might be possible to prove this by arguments drawn from natural sources, it was evidently in the first

place communicated to man by revelation. The indestructibility of matter, and the continual changes which it undergoes, point out to us, with a force that cannot be evaded, that even if we suppose it to be essentially eternal, still that Being who formed at first, and still continues to govern the world, cannot be of a similar nature: he, and he alone, must be self-existent, eternal, and without beginning, subject to no change, and unlimited in all his attributes. Such a condition is inconsistent with materiality. And the immateriality of the Divine Being has, therefore, with all the wise, been admitted without question. Hence, then, a state, or mode of existence, is believed, of which, in consequence of our finite condition, we can form no distinct idea; we only perceive that if we attempt to bring Deity within the grasp of our comprehension, it must be by clothing it with such attributes as to make it no longer Deity. We may easily suppose some great and glorious being, invested with all power and all goodness; but when we take, one by one, from the complex idea, those simple ones which belong only to the finite, the whole gradually disappears. We imagine this mighty Intelligence, first, independent of duration; next, independent of space; so that his existence could continue, and has continued, without either one or the other; we next abstract all passion or emotion, which we know to be only attributed in a figurative sense to God; we take away visibility and palpability, which are properties of matter; and the personality, with which our idea was clothed at first, entirely disappears. All that remains is an abstract idea of power and

goodness. But, as power is the will of God, and goodness merely accordance with the scheme upon which he has built this universe, we are reduced to acknowledge that we cannot form any distinct idea of God, so far as regards his mode of existence. The relation subsisting between this awful and incomprehensible Being and man is entirely another matter, and this is made known to us by revelation, which, by types adapted to our capacity, has shadowed forth enough of this mystery to us to point out our duties in consequence.

Now all power being in the hands of God, and he having been pleased for his glory to create the universe, it was clearly in his power to create beings in so far like himself as that they could exist independent of matter, and that he did so has likewise, in all ages, been an article of belief. Man was formed of the dust of the earth; that is, the body of man was so formed; but it was not till the breath of life was infused into him by another and a separate act of the Divine power, that Adam took his stand in the scale of created beings. Creation consisted in calling into existence that which before was not. God made all things out of nothing by the word of his power, so "that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."[1] Now the formation of Adam's body cannot, therefore, be esteemed an act of creating energy; the substance of which it was made previously existed; whereas the creation of the soul resulted from an immediate emanation from the spirit of God, "And God breathed into his nostrils the

[1] Heb. xi. 3.

breath of life; and man became a living soul."[1] Here, then, is a creation of spirit distinct from the creation of matter; and though the soul was instantly united to the body, Adam was, without doubt, well aware of the compound character of his existence. This distinction, thus marked in the earliest of extant writings, has never been lost sight of; and the religion of mankind, however far removed from the truth in other respects, has always proceeded upon the supposition that the soul is immaterial, and, consequently, immortal; and that there were other orders of spiritual beings, whose operations were not clogged by a material body. Pneumatology, then, will be the name given to the seience which treats of such beings, and will, of course, be derived from *πνευμα* and *λογος*; but *πνευμα* signifies not exactly spirit, but breath; and St. Paul, when he speaks of *το σωμα πνευματικον*[2] (which, by a strange contradiction in terms, we have rendered "spiritual body," instead of "ethereal body"), refers to that body, glorified indeed and purified, but still material, which the spirit shall assume at the resurrection. Hence the term *πνευμα* is applied, for want of a more correct one, to God himself.

Pneumatology can have no reference to the being or attributes of the Great Supreme. It investigates the nature of spirit only as so invested with matter as to become sensible to our material organs. The appearance of an angel, whether good or evil; of a human being departed, or at a distance; of a being, of an order distinct from men or angels, the kind of

[1] Gen. ii. 7. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 44.

sounds by which such beings have been supposed to intimate their coming, the sensations which have been attributed to their presence, all are matters of pneumatological investigation. Of these we shall treat briefly.

No less universal than the tenets which have been already mentioned was that of the difference which obtained among spiritual intelligences, that they were of various ranks and orders in power and dignity, that some were benevolent and others malicious, that some maintained their allegiance to the Great Ruler of all, and that others were in a state of revolt against him. This notion exhibited itself in various forms; but it prevailed in the mythology of all nations, and furnishes, like the universality of serpent worship, a proof of the common origin of every system. It displayed itself among the Persians in the contest between Oromasdes and Arimanes; in the Egyptian system, by the quarrel and battle between Osiris and Typhon; in that of the Greeks, by the wars of the Giants and Titans against the gods; in the north by Loke and his offspring, Fenris, Midgard, and Hela; and by the warfare maintained against the gods by Surtur and his fury spirits, by Utgarda Loke and his gigantic hosts. But there were other kinds of spirits, which were in some respects like the souls of men, not sufficiently wicked to be in avowed revolt against God, nor yet holy enough to be living in conformity to his will. A belief in these, though by no means universal, was yet very widely spread. The existence of the former is revealed by Scripture, that of the latter is a

matter of human speculation; hence the universality of a belief in the one, and the non-universality of that in the other.

We propose to examine the opinions which have been held, and the appearances which have been credited of good angels; of evil angels, or, as they are commonly called, devils; of those spirits which, being neither angelic nor diabolical, have been mostly influenced by good will towards mankind; of those neutral spirits which have exerted a malefic influence on mankind; of those from whose operations neither good nor evil have proceeded; and of the appearances of human spirits. On each of these topics many volumes have been written, and many theories adopted. The thunders of the Vatican have been heard, and the terrors of the Inquisition have been put in operation, to check sentiments on these mystic subjects which seemed favourable to heresy. And though it would require a long life barely to read the tomes which the occult sciences have elicited, it is possible, and cannot be wholly without interest, to trace the course of public opinion on matters confessedly beyond the reach of the unassisted human intellect. Now, too, that the incubus has passed away, we can ascertain, by the energies displayed on its removal, how heavily it pressed upon every species of available knowledge. The pneumatological creed of the middle ages acted to a considerable extent in the same manner that Mahomedanism has done in those countries subjected to its influence. It established a number of facts and influences, which were to be received without

question, on pain of incurring the guilt of heresy. The major part of mankind, therefore, who dared not disbelieve what they were taught as a matter of religion, however much it might contradict their reason and their experience, gradually, if they thought on subjects connected at all with pneumatology, prostrated their judgment before what they considered a necessary faith. Those only who were profoundly versed both in science and theology felt themselves at liberty to reject the popular opinions; and so dangerous was such a rejection, that they rarely made known their infidelity. This state of things continued with but little amelioration till the University of Paris, by the publication of their celebrated Articles, gave a better tone to the sentiments of the public. It had, however, hardly passed away in England, even in the reign of James I.; nor was England behind the Continent in the spirit of rational investigation.

That the nature of angels is more dignified than that of man in his present estate, there can be no doubt entertained by those who both read and believe the Scriptures. We find mention made of them at a very early period; and the tenor of the sacred writings would lead us to imagine that their creation must have been considerably prior to that of man. The prince of the power of the air had been already thrust out from the presence of God when Adam was placed in Eden; and there seems reason to believe that St. John alluded to the number of those who fell, when he speaks of the third part of the stars being drawn down along with the old serpent. It will be irre-

levant here to speak of the causes which led to this expulsion, or rather the opinions which have been held about such causes, as our present object is to treat of those which have been entertained concerning the angels which kept their first estate; of the offices in which they were engaged, the first of which we have been permitted to know anything is that of defending the glory of God by fighting under the command of Michael their prince against Lucifer and his rebellious hosts. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven."[1] On subjects like these, and quoting from a book so little understood and so full of awful mysteries as the Apocalypse, it would be absurd to attempt exactness in chronology, but we may be allowed to remark thus much; That this battle, here spoken of, must have been immediately subsequent to that crime, be it what it may, which occasioned the expulsion of the sinning angels from heaven; for if the third part of the stars in heaven (v. 4.) do refer, as the most eminent commentators suppose, to the angelic hosts which fell with Lucifer, that event must have been closely followed by the combat spoken of by St. John but a few verses lower; and the issue of that combat was, that "their place was no more found in heaven." The short allusion here made by the inspired apostle to the doings of higher orders of intelligences than our own, this brief and distant glimpse of the awful secrets of heaven, has

[1] Rev. xii. 7, 8.

been, as might well be imagined, made the basis of a host of wild and unwarrantable theories. The place where the battle was fought, the number of those who combated, the time the conflict endured, the orders of angels concerned, the period that the fallen spirits had remained sinless, all were the subjects of vehement and most unprofitable discussion. A few specimens of the opinions entertained may suffice. The followers of St. Thomas Aquinas maintain, that the angels who fell sinned the second instant after their creation, that the battle took place immediately, was fought in "the Empyræan heaven," and occupied exactly one instant (*punctum temporis, nempe individuum nunc*); so that, in the third instant after the creation of angels, one third of them were cast down to hell. Those who side with Scotus add two more instants to the unsullied existence of the angels, and declare that the conflict took place in the firmament. This was also the opinion of St. Augustine.[1] Eusebius, in his "Ecclesiastical History," has preserved a great number of similar theories. Disputes were also held, and carried on not very gently on the questions, When were angels created? What their number was? Whether it were possible for an angel to go from one place to another without passing through the intermediate space? Whether they occupied any space at all? And if so, how much? How many angels could dance on the point of a needle without jostling one another? What were the angels made of? And this last question was answered in a very singular way by some of the

[1] De Civ. Dei.

learned. "The angels were formed from the chaos before the separation of the dry land from the water—the good angels from the right side, those who fell from the left side, which side was called '*putredo terræ*,' the rottenness of the earth."[1] Mentioning this notion, Reginald Scott says, "it was adopted by those who would be thought methodical, and to have crept out of wisdom's bosom;"[2] but he coarsely though facetiously indicates for them a very different birth-place.

[1] Disc. concerning Devils and Spirits, book i. chap. viii.

[2] Id. ib.

CHAPTER II.

APPARITIONS OF THE DECEASED, COMMONLY CALLED GHOSTS.

THE determined scepticism of the philosophers of the last century on this subject has now vanished—the universal credulity of the vulgar has vanished with it, and now, if at any time, it may stand some chance of a fair and candid examination.

The words of our Lord to his disciples, "Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have," are enough to satisfy the Christian as to the possibility of such appearances, for surely had there been cause He would have rebuked them for their vain and idle superstition. On the contrary, He tacitly admits the correctness of their views on the subject of spirits, and argues from that correctness to the fact of His own bodily resurrection .The well authenticated relations, which attest the appearance of the departed, are too numerous to leave a doubt on the subject; and if in the pages which follow, we relate or repeat some ludicrous instances of mere superstition, it is as much to show cause for the disbelief which in many minds so long prevailed as to exhibit the need of careful investigation before we accept any narrative of the kind.

Time so occupied cannot be said to be lost, for every *fact* well attested which tends to reveal the

nature of a spiritual existence, or the points of contact between the visible and the invisible world, cannot but be of importance both in a moral and psychological point of view.

The existence of ghosts has been, among all ignorant nations, one of the grounds on which they built their belief of the soul's immortality. The feast of souls, observed by the North American Indians,[1] is one of those striking solemnities which cannot fail to produce a powerful impression on minds capable of enthusiasm. In the month of November the different families which compose one of their tribes assemble and erect a log hut in a solitary part of the wilderness. Each family collects the skeletons of its ancestors who have not yet been interred in the common tombs of the tribe; the skulls of the dead are painted with vermilion, and the skeletons are adorned with their military accoutrements. They choose a stormy day, and bring their bones to the hut in the desert. Games and funeral solemnities are celebrated, and ancient treaties again ratified in the presence of their fathers. They sit down to the banquet, the living intermingled with the dead. The elders of the tribe relate their mythic fables and their ancient traditions. They then dig a spacious grave, and with funeral dirges carry the bones of their fathers to the tombs. The remains of the respective families are separated by bear skins and beaver furs. A mound of earth is raised over their graves, on the top of which a tree is planted, which they term the tree of tears and of sleep.

[1] Adair's Hist. of the American Indians.

From the consideration of such ideas as these it will not seem alien to our purpose to gather together a few of the strange and wild notions which prevailed among our own forefathers, on the subject of spectral appearances. A ghost differs from others, by always being the spirit of a human being now dead—visible, but not tangible. A work on the subject, written by the Rev. I. Taylor, contains, among much flippancy, some good remarks. Speaking to the believers in the vulgar apparitions of his own time, he says, "If you should fall in with a ghost, do not attempt to exorcise it, or in any way to lay it, but proceed as you would do were it a disagreeable fleshly intruder, and you will seldom fail in your object. Thus when a friar thought proper to personate a ghost at the court of the late Emperor Joseph, King Augustus, who then happened to be at Vienna, and in that apartment of the imperial palace which the ghost occupied, walked up to him, and taking him by the middle, flung him out of the window, *laying* him thereby so effectually on the pavement that he never again made his appearance in this world." But the best authority for popular opinions of ghosts, is Reginald Scott, who, with great minuteness, gives his sources of information. "And first," says he, "you should understand, that the souls in heaven may come down and appear to us when they list, and assume any body, saving their own, otherwise such souls should not be perfectly happy. You may know the good souls from the bad very easily; for a damned soul hath a heavy and sour look, whereas a saint's soul hath a pleasant and merry

countenance; these also are white and shining, the others coal-black. The souls of the blessed do most commonly appear to those who are born on ember days, and they are oftenest seen at night, for that men may then be at best leisure and most quiet. They never appear to the whole multitude, seldom to a few, but commonly to one only. They are also most seen by those about to die, as Thrasella saw Pope Felix. They are seen by some, and others, though present, see nothing of them; as Ursine saw Peter and Paul, yet many standing by saw no such sight, but thought it was a lie, as," says Scott, "I do also. Now a good soul taketh no shape but a man, but a damned soul can take, and commonly doth take, the shape of a beast, a serpent, a blackamore, or especially of a heretic. Hence we learn that, in Scott's opinion, blackamores and heretics are not men, but beasts; also that a heretic has some distinguishing mark about him, by which he may infallibly be known from a Catholic.

Scott was a determined disbeliever in all that he considered supernatural, and his venerable tome turns into ridicule everything of the kind. Yet some of the best and wisest men of his age stated themselves to have been subject to unearthly visitations, and as it would be impossible to doubt the veracity of Melancthon, and difficult to question the soundness of his judgment, it may be to the purpose to relate, upon his authority, what he states himself to have witnessed. Travelling in Germany, in company with some other persons, they saw a bird of an unusual appearance sitting upon a tree, and singing with a human voice;

at last it clapped its wings, and exclaimed, "Oh, eternity! eternity! who can tell the length of eternity?" Melancthon immediately commanded it, in the name of the holy Trinity, to say what it was; whereupon it exclaimed, "I am a damned spirit!" and immediately flew away. This amiable and learned man was, however, a victim to hypochondriasis, as was his more renowned contemporary, Luther. The latter, sleeping one night with a bag of nuts at the head of his bed, which nuts were the present of a lady, the devil, as he tells us, took the liberty to crack the nuts and to fling the shells at the lawful owner. "Do me the favour to dispose of them otherwise," said Luther; "you are perfectly welcome to the nuts, but do not throw the shells in my face."

Much discredit has been thrown upon the truth of stories concerning supernatural appearances, by their apparent want of consequences, and it has been said by the sceptics before-mentioned, that it is seldom, save in novels of the castle and trap-door—the dagger and bowl-of-poison school, that ghosts are brought into effectual service. And it must be admitted that the notion has been made useful in Jesuitical hands towards the support of certain doctrines which were imagined to need it.

Gregory the Great speaks of a priest who had received many attentions from an unknown person, in a warm bath. By way of recompense, he brought him, one day, some bread which had been among the Eucharistic oblations. "Why do you give me this, father?" his attendant said; "this is holy bread. I

cannot eat it. I was once master here, and am still bound to the place for my sins. If you wish to serve me, offer this bread in my behalf, and know that your prayers are heard when you find me here no longer." The speaker then vanished. A week was now spent by the priest in fasting, prayers, and daily offerings of the Eucharist. When it was expired, he went to the bath again, but he saw nothing of his former attendant.[1] Mr. Soames,[2] quoting this legend, remarks: "This tale is an instructive commentary upon prevailing notions as to the soul's posthumous condition. As it is only one among many such stories, long circulated in proof of purgatory, and in support of services for the dead, our Reformers having no Scriptural warrant for such services, were fully justified in discontinuing them. Though of high antiquity, they had been largely indebted for popularity to such contemptible inventions, and they have been latterly urged as undeniable evidences that primitive times held the Platonic doctrine of purgatory."

Among stories of ghosts, got up for the purpose of establishing peculiar doctrines, or of serving particular purposes, may be mentioned another, given in Mr. Soames' "History of the Anglo-Saxon Church." It is related of Augustine, the Apostle of Kent, by Brompton,[3] and touches upon the danger of neglecting to pay tithes. Its real value is, however, as Mr. Soames[4] remarks, that it establishes the fact that

[1] Greg. Mag. Op. tom. iii. p. 304.
[2] Soames' Hist. Angl. Sax. Church, vol. i. p. 64.
[3] Brompton, X. Script. 736.
[4] Soames' Hist. Angl. Sax. Church, vol. i. p. 84.

tithes were regularly paid by the British Christians before the Saxon invasion.

When Augustine was preaching in Oxfordshire, a village priest addressed him thus: "Father, the lord of this place refuses to pay tithes, and my threats of excommunication only increase his obstinacy." Augustine then tried his powers of persuasion, but the lord replied: "Did not I plough and sow the land? The tenth part belongs to him who owns the remaining nine." It was now time for mass, and Augustine, turning to the altar, said: "I command every excommunicated person to leave the church." Immediately a pallid corpse arose from beneath the doorway, stalked across the church-yard, and stood motionless beyond its boundary. The congregation, gazing in horror and affright, called Augustine's attention to the spectre. He did not choose, however, to break off the service. Being concluded, he said: "Be not alarmed; with cross and holy water in hand, we shall know the meaning of this." He then went forward, and thus accosted the ghastly stranger: "I enjoin thee, in the name of God, tell me who thou art?" The ghost replied: "In British times, I was lord here, but no warnings of the priest could ever bring me to pay my tithes. At length he excommunicated me, and my disembodied soul was thrust into hell. When the excommunicated were bidden to depart, your attendant angels drove me from my grave." Augustine's power was now exerted in raising the excommunicating priest from his narrow dwelling-place, and having thus a second spectre before him, he asked: "Know you this person?" The unearthly

clergyman replied: "Full well, and to my cost." He was then reminded by Augustine of God's mercy, and of the departed lord's long torture in hell. A scourge was put into his hand. The excommunicated party knelt before him, received absolution, and then quietly returned to the grave. His own return thither soon followed, although Augustine, desirous of his assistance in preaching the Gospel, would fain have prayed for a renewed term of life. Of course the tithes were regularly paid in future, by the hitherto refractory Saxon.

There is a little story current in Germany, and which is translated by William J. Thoms, Esq., in his "Lays and Legends of various Nations," which is very pretty, and will lead us directly to another important thing, to wit, the dress of ghosts. The story to which we allude is called the "Stolen Pennies," and runs thus:—"A man and his wife and children were, once upon a time, sitting at their noontide meal, with a good friend whom they had invited to share it with them; and while they were so seated, the clock struck twelve, and the stranger saw the door open, and a very little child, dressed all in white, came; it neither looked about nor spake a word, but went right through the chamber. Soon afterwards it came back, as silently as before, and went out of the door again; and it came again, in like manner, on the second and third days, until at length the stranger asked the good man of the house to whom that beautiful child belonged who came every day at noon into the chamber? 'I have never seen it,' said he, 'nor do I know to whom it can belong.' On the following

day, the stranger pointed it out to the father when it came in, but he saw it not, neither did his wife or children see it. Then the stranger arose, went to the door through which it had passed, opened it a little way and peeped in: then saw he the child sitting on the ground, groping and raking in the crevices on the floor; as soon, however, as it perceived the stranger, it vanished. Then he related what he had seen, and described the child so minutely, that the mother knew it at once, and said: 'Alas! that is my own dear child that died about four weeks since.' Then he broke up the flooring and found there two pennies, that the child had once received from the mother to give to a poor beggar, but it had thought that it could buy sweetmeats with the two pennies, so had kept them and hidden them in the crevices of the floor, and therefore it had found no rest in the grave, but had come every day, at noon, to search for the pennies; therefore the parents gave the money to a poor man, and after that the child was never more seen."

The idea of the restlessness of lost spirits is presented to the mind in a thousand different ways. The perpetual hunt of "*der Wilde Jager;*" the ceaseless and stormy voyage of that spectre-ship called the Flying Dutchman, the crew of which are said to have been stricken with plague as a punishment for some dreadful crime in the infancy of navigation, and condemned after death still to be the sport of winds and waves, are cases in point. The punishment of Paolo and Francesca di Rimini and others, who sinned in like manner, was but the common superstition of the

day, recast in the mind of Dante; and our own Chaucer expresses a similar idea.

> And breakers of the laws sooth to sain,
> And lecherous folk after that they been dead
> Shall whirl about the world always in pain,
> Till many a world be passed out of dread.
>
> *Assembly of Fowls.*

In the story of the stolen pennies we have two particulars respecting the belief held by a nation allied in blood with our own, in ghosts worthy of notice, viz., first, that ghosts can appear at all times, even at noon-day; and next, that they do, contrary to the opinion of Reginald Scott, appear in proper person and proper costume. In the little story related above there was a reason assigned for the appearance; but in seven out of ten of extant ghost stories, there is so evident a want of cause, that they must be classed as inventions, and not very cunningly devised. Often, indeed, when a more direct purpose has been assigned, darker motives have been the origin. So long back as 1632, Glanville relates, that a man gave evidence before magistrates that the spirit of a young woman had appeared to him. It appeared that the deceased, who was possessed of considerable personal attractions, had been way-laid, grossly ill-treated, and at last murdered. These particulars, with some others unnecessary to repeat, the ghost declared to him, and also told him who were the murderers, and where they had concealed the body. The informer then led the officers of justice to a pit, where they found her mangled remains; the two accused persons were apprehended, and, on the evidence above related, condemned and executed.

To the last they persevered in solemnly maintaining their innocence. In this case it seems but too evident by whom the atrocious deed had been committed. Yet there are instances recorded, and that too, on competent authority, of crimes having been prevented or detected by spectral appearances; and of all stories in which ghosts have been so instrumental, the latest, and one of the best, is thus related by Mr. Montgomery Martin, in his History of Australia, p. 130.

A settler on the great western road was missing from his small farm. His convict overseer gave out that he had gone off privately to England, and left the property in his care. This was thought extraordinary, as the settler was not in difficulties, and was a steady prudent man. The affair, however, was almost forgotten, when one Saturday night another settler was returning home with his horse and cart from market. On arriving at a part of the fence near the road-side, on the farm of his absent neighbour, he thought he saw him sitting on the rails: immediately the farmer pulled up his mare, hailed his friend, and receiving no answer, got out of the cart, and went towards the fence. His neighbour, as he plainly appeared to be, quitted the fence and crossed the field towards a pond in the direction of his home, which it was supposed he had deserted. The farmer thought it strange, remounted his cart, and proceeded home: the next morning he went to his neighbour's cottage expecting to see him, but saw only the overseer, who laughed at the story, and said that his master was by this time near the shores of England.

The circumstance was so inexplicable that the farmer went before the nearest justice of the peace (I think it was the Penrith bench), related the preceding circumstances, and added, that he feared foul play had taken place. A native black who was (and I believe still is) attached to the station as a constable, was sent with some of the mounted police, and accompanied the farmer to the rails, where the latter thought he saw, the evening before, his deceased friend. The spot was then pointed out to the black, without showing him the direction which the lost person apparently took after leaving the fence. On close inspection a part of the upper rail was observed to be discoloured. It was scraped with a knife by the black, who next smelt at it and tasted it. Immediately after he crossed the fence, and took a straight direction for the pond near the cottage; on its surface was a scum which he took up in a leaf, and after tasting and smelling, he declared to be white man's fat several times; somewhat after the manner of a blood-hound he coursed round the lake; at last he darted into the neighbouring thicket, and halted at a place containing some loose and decayed brushwood. On removing this he thrust down the ramrod of his musket into the earth, smelt at it, and then desired the spectators to dig there. Instantly spades were brought from the cottage, and the body of the settler was found with the skull fractured, and presenting every indication of having been some time immersed in water. The overseer who was in possession of the property of the deceased, and who had invented the story of his departure for England, was committed to

gaol and tried for murder. The foregoing circumstantial evidence formed the main proofs. He was found guilty, sentenced to death, and proceeded to the scaffold protesting his innocence. Here, however, his hardihood forsook him; he acknowledged the murder of his late master; that he came behind him as he was crossing the identical rail on which the farmer fancied he saw the deceased, and with one blow on the head killed him, dragged the body to the pond, and threw it in, but after some days took it out again and buried it where it was found. Mr. M. adds, "the sagacity of the native black was remarkable; but the unaccountable manner in which the murder was discovered, is one of the inscrutable dispensations of providence."

Now upon a story so well authenticated and so circumstantial as this a few remarks may be useful. In the first place the wonder does not stop with the apparition of the deceased settler; the proceedings of the black are far more extraordinary. That he should be able to distinguish after the lapse of a considerable time, during which it had been exposed to the air, and become partly decomposed, the fat of a WHITE man is of itself sufficient to stagger belief, but when without other index than scent we find him tracing the body to the pond, and thence to its final resting-place, we must pause before we give our assent. We do not mean for a moment to call in question any of the facts related by Mr. Martin, but we would draw from them widely different conclusions from those to which he appears to have come. It is well known that a bloodhound even at the

distance of two or three days can trace the path of a stag or a fox, but these are animals having a strong scent, and we do not think any instances are on record of a bloodhound having tracked the path of a man a week after the man had trodden it; here, however, we have not a bloodhound but a black man tracking the body of a man by the scent several weeks (for so the narrative implies) after the event, and after tasting a scum on the surface of the water and deciding it to be the fat of a *white* man, he discovers the place where the remains are interred. The party accused of the murder at last confessed, and did not accuse any accomplice, so that there is no reason to think either the neighbouring farmer or the black constable, accessories before the fact—but how did they get their information—for few in England will credit the ghost of the one or the scent of the other. There is a mode of explaining this mystery which may be, perhaps, more satisfactory. Supposing the farmer, by some means or other, to have acquired the knowledge of his friend's death, and the way in which his body was disposed of, and to have communicated this information to the black constable, one part of the difficulty is thus avoided, and the whole case will appear a case of collusion between the farmer and the black. But then it may be said what right have we to attack the integrity of the farmer? We do not do so. There are circumstances connected with the state of New South Wales which make it very probable that to have accused the convict overseer in the first place would have endangered the accuser's life, whereas by the course taken

a kind of supernatural awe is thrown over the whole, which would serve at once to guarantee the integrity and secure the person of the farmer who took on himself the office of prosecutor.

The story of the stolen pennies led us to the subject of the dress of ghosts; and an ancedote occurs connected with this topic, in Mr. Taylor's book, one of the best authenticated, and the most clearly explained, that grace the annals of ghostly history:—In the middle of the last century, there was, in a town, in the west of England, a club consisting of twenty-four members, who were wont once in the week to hold social meetings, for the especial purpose of drinking punch and talking politics. Like the academy of Rubens at Antwerp, each member had his peculiar chair, and the president's was more exalted than the rest. One of the members had been for some time in a dying state, and his chair remained, of course, vacant. The club being met on their usual night, inquiries were made concerning their friend, who lived in the adjoining house; the answer was, that he could not live through the night. This mournful intelligence threw a gloom on the conversation, and all efforts to turn it from the sad subject were unavailing. About midnight the door opened; the hitherto absent member entered, seated himself in his own place, gazed wildly round, but said nothing: at length he again rose, walked out, and left them. It was not till after a long pause that the company recovered their speech, and of course their first and whole conversation was on the dreadful apparition which they had just witnessed. They

sent to the next house and found that at the very hour he had been seen in the club, their companion died. This story was credited, for twenty-three respectable individuals were able to testify its truth; and what could be urged against it? Years rolled on; the story ceased to engage attention, and was at last forgotten, unless when occasionally related to silence an unbeliever. One of the club was a medical practitioner, and in the course of his practice was called on to attend an old woman, who had been in the habit of attending the sick. She said she had one thing lay very heavily on her mind, and she wished to disburthen herself of it. "You remember," said she, "Mr. ——, whose ghost occasioned so much talk twenty years ago. Well, I was his nurse, and on the night he died I left the room for something that was wanted, at which time he was in a high delirium; in less than a quarter of an hour I returned, and found that the patient had dressed himself and gone out; I was so much frightened that I had no power to stir, but very soon, to my astonishment, he entered the room shivering, and his teeth chattering with cold, pulled off his clothes, lay down and died instantly. I could (said the old woman) have contradicted the story of the ghost, but I dared not, though I knew, from what had happened, that he must have gone to the club-room himself."

Most ghost stories might be accounted for in a manner equally satisfactory, but being not unfrequently mere tricks, there is no motive to reveal the mystery, and many little circumstances which

would tend to throw light on the wonder are overlooked at the time, and totally forgotten afterwards.

We before noticed a remark of Taylor's, that ghosts should be treated as living beings, if you wish ever to derive benefit from their visitation, or, indeed, to escape disastrous consequences. To this end he relates a tale, that about fifty, or at the present date we may safely say eighty years ago, some labouring men met at a public-house at Ripon, in Yorkshire, for the purpose of convivial enjoyment. After much merriment, the subject of courage was introduced, and each man had a wonderful adventure of his own to relate, with a ghost, a mad dog, or a pugilist; much boasting followed, till one of the company, who had hitherto remained silent, rose and declared that he would wager ten guineas that not one of them would dare to fetch from the bone-house a skull, and place it on the table before them,—the bone-house in the parish church-yard was about a mile from thence. This wager was immediately accepted by one of the party, who forthwith proceeded on his expedition. The person who had proposed the bet now requested of the landlady the loan of a sheet, declaring, that as he knew a shorter way than that which his opponent had taken, he would soon cool the courage of this heroic adventurer. Highly enjoying the joke, the landlady complied, and our wagerer set off with the utmost speed: he arrived at the bone-house first, and, throwing the sheet around him, placed himself in a corner of the place. Very soon the other arrived with a slow deliberate pace, opened the door, and, seeing the

figure in white, was, as he afterwards confessed, very much alarmed. He resumed his courage, stooped down, and picked up a skull. Immediately the phantom exclaimed, in a deep and hollow voice, "That is my father's skull." "If it is your father's skull," said the adventurer, "you may have it;" and so saying, he threw down that and picked up another. Again the figure in white interfered: "That," said he, "is my mother's skull." The same answer was returned, the skull thrown down, and a third chosen. "That," exclaimed the ghost, "is my own skull." "If it is your own skull," was the reply, "I'll have it;" and off he ran, keeping possession of the skull, and the spectre after him. In his flight through the churchyard he stumbled over a stone, which occasioned the ghost to fall over him, not a little increasing his fright. He soon extricated himself, and bent his way towards the inn from whence he had set out. Bolting suddenly into the room, he flung the skull on the table, his hair standing on end, and his countenance exhibiting every mark of terror. "There," cried he, "is the skull you sent me for, but, look out, the right owner is coming for it." Down went the skull, and in another instant in came the figure in the sheet, and away ran the company like the blasphemy club at the ghost of Michael Kelly, some out at the window, some up the chimney, fully believing that a ghost had come to punish their sacrilegious theft. It was afterwards acknowledged that the intrepid adventurer had won his wager. Had he taken with him a good stick, and cudgelled the spirit into good manners, he would have escaped his fright,

his exertion, and his fall, and have won the more easily his ten guineas.

It is well, however, not to use pistols or swords against ghosts, lest, contrary to your expectation, you find yourself involved in a charge of manslaughter, as was the case with one who too roughly laid a ghost at Peckham; or, perhaps, in a similar scrape to that of a young midshipman, who, going from Plymouth to London, slept one night at a country town, where he heard, from his astonished landlord, a very strange account of a ghost, which, dressed in white, was accustomed to parade the church-yard. Strengthened with an extra glass of grog, he determined to face this apparition, and, if possible, bring her to action. He went to the church-yard, and saw through the hazy air something moving backwards and forwards, but its shape he could not discern. He spake to it several times without receiving any answer, and a brick which he flung at it had only the effect of rendering it quicker in its motions. He then cautiously approached, but so misty was the air that even when almost close the shape of the spectre was still unknown. Drawing his cutlass he bestowed upon the unlucky apparition a hearty cut, at which it immediately flew out of sight, and afterwards becoming again visible, moved up and down with surprising velocity. He then went home and went to bed. Early the next morning the young sailor was awakened by a voice of the town-crier, and exclaiming, with the usual prelude, "Oh yes! whereas some evil-disposed person or persons did, last night, cut, maim, and otherwise injure the rector's white mare,

which was quietly grazing in the church-yard: this is to give notice, that any person who will give such information as that the offender or offenders may be brought to justice, shall receive ten guineas reward." The valorous seaman left the town as quietly as possible.

We have had occasion to mention the exorcism, or laying of ghosts. It seems that the most usual place for laying ghosts was in the Red Sea. This was not necessary, for a key or a key-hole would answer the purpose, without being any the worse for use, on account of its new occupant. This system was not peculiar to ghosts, for we find that spiritual essences of any kind might, by some potent charm, be deprived of their liberty, and, from wandering about through the thin air, might be imprisoned wheresoever it pleased those who had thus obtained the mastery over them.

One more ghost story, and we have done. The story which we are about to relate was told the writer by an intimate friend, a graduate of Cambridge, and he had it from his brother, a post-captain in the navy, and the hero of the tale. Captain S—— was once appointed to the command of a tender, not at the time, it seems, in much employment, and he had only about a dozen men with him, he being the only officer. The ship was an old ninety-gun ship, and being no longer in active service, was painted entirely black: at the same time her guns, stores, and crew being taken out of her, she drew but little water, and made a figure at once dismal and colossal. Imagine so small a crew in so huge and desolate

a vessel, anchored ten miles from a shore, where nothing but reeds and marshes were to be seen, and during weather, wet, foggy, and squally. Captain S—— had abundance of time to meditate; and among other subjects which his situation forced upon him was the number of wild legends connected with the old ship he now commanded. She had cruised in the West Indies during the reign of the buccaneers. Scenes of bloodshed and wild revelry had been witnessed on and between her decks. She had been laden with Spanish gold, and her crews had sent to their last accounts hundreds of pirates. In short, she was a haunted ship. Tradition, whatever is said for their bravery, had but little to speak for the good conduct, in other respects, of her once occupants; and it was said, that execrations long obsolete sometimes startled the ears of the living between her decks. Save the captain's apartments, all the bulkheads were cleared away, and the view was fully suited to the ship, the season, and the station. For some nights all went off very well, though Captain S—— thought there certainly were very strange and very loud noises; but at last these became more and more distinct, and formed themselves before long into the noise and din of a tumultuous assembly in the midshipmen's berth. The rattling of glasses and bottles, the spilling of liquor, oaths and songs of a past period, were to be heard with a fearful distinctness, till at length the tumult of quarrel succeeded to the tumult of intoxication, and the clashing of daggers, mingled with discourse such as in the present day is rarely heard, either on land or at sea. Night

after night this continued, and continued to increase, till one night Captain S—— heard a low, suppressed, but inexpressibly bitter laugh, and then marked a stealthy step coming round towards the door of his cabin; step after step he counted as it drew near, and then the handle of his door was violently shaken. Captain S—— was a man whose bravery had been too often tried to be supposed very subject to the influence of fear, but he acknowledged that his heart beat now quicker than usual: he leaped from his cot, drew his sabre, and approached the door; again the same bitter suppressed laugh was heard, and again the door handle was shaken. Captain S—— now suddenly flung open the door, and cut furiously about him, but nothing was to be seen; and the moon was shining between the decks, so that he could see from one end of the ship to the other. Struck with a shivering awe he returned to bed, but no sooner was the door closed than a long bitter peal of the most deriding laughter was raised from the scene of the former revelry. After this he never heard any more, but was soon, to his great joy, appointed to a frigate. This story probably owes much to the powerful and excited imagination of the captain. It certainly owes not a little to the imagination of the relater, and his exquisite mode of telling it; and, as we before remarked, we are not acquainted with any of the attendant circumstances, and, consequently, not at all qualified to judge. It must be admitted, that a haunted ship is a yet more fearfully wild and desolate subject for fancy than a haunted house, or even a haunted castle.

We must carefully distinguish between ghosts and apparitions. Every ghost, if it becomes visible, is an apparition; but every apparition is not a ghost. A ghost is the spirit of a deceased person; any other supernatural sight is an apparition.

"Partial darkness is the most powerful means by which the sight is deceived. Night is, therefore, the proper time for apparitions; and the state of the mind during that season, the fear and caution observed, the opportunity given for ambuscades and assassinations, depriving us of society, and cutting off many trains of pleasing ideas, which the objects in the light never fail to cause, are all calculated to inspire the mind with apprehension; and so much of our happiness depends upon our senses, that the loss of any one would be sufficient to occasion us a great degree of horror and uneasiness." Thus speaks a very entertaining writer on the subject, and adds, "The notions of the ancients respecting the soul may receive some illustration from these principles. In the dark, or twilight, the imagination frequently transforms an inanimate object into a human figure, but on a nearer view this resemblance is not to be seen. Hence the ancients sometimes fancied they saw their ancestors, but not finding the reality, distinguished these illusions by the name of shades; and certainly the same feelings have operated in modern times." This reasoning is rather specious than solid, but its refutation would lead us very far from our subject.

We shall now simply give a few anecdotes of remarkable apparitions which appear not to have been

dreams. In the sixteenth century, Jacopo Donati, the head of that powerful family, one of the most important in Venice, had a child, the heir to the family, very ill. At night, when in bed, Donati saw the door of his chamber opened, and the head of a man thrust in. Knowing that it was no one of his servants, he roused the house, drew his sword, and, attended by several of his domestics, went over the whole palace, all the servants protesting that they had seen such a head thrust in at the doors of their several chambers at the same hour: the fastenings were found all secure, so that no one could have come in from without. The next day the child died. This anecdote rests upon the authority of Henningus Grosius, and deserves a place with the Scotch *bodach glass*, and the Irish *banshee.*

Many apparitions are related to have performed wonderful actions, to have gained victories (as those supposed to be gained by St. Jago over the Moors in Spain), to have foretold future events, and to have done many things far beyond human power. The Romans believed that Castor and Pollux frequently appeared to their armies, and overcame their enemies. On one occasion, Livy tells us, that after a battle had been successfully waged, two young men, of more than human beauty, were seen approaching Rome, and first announced the victory to the Consul Domitius, who, refusing to credit the information, they stroked his sable beard, and it became immediately yellow. From this circumstance he was called Ahenobarbus, or brazen beard; and his family continued to bear it until the time of the Emperor

Nero, the son of the Consul Domitius Ahenobarbus, and through the marriage of whose widow with the Emperor Claudius, Nero succeeded to the throne; the name became then extinct. The annals of Rome are full of such tales. It is reported of Sylla, the dictator, that when an infant, and borne about in the arms of his nurse, he was met by a tall and majestic woman, who declared him born to be a ruler, and happy. He was eminently fortunate, for he obtained the supreme power after an almost uninterrupted course of prosperity.

Even in our own history, we have some popular stories of this kind. William Rufus was warned by the apparition of a monk (some think by a monk in flesh and blood), not to hunt on the day on which he died; but slighting the warning, he was accidentally killed by Sir John Tyrrel.

Many more such things might be adduced, but we cannot better conclude this chapter than by an account of the singular case of Nicholai, the eminent and learned bookseller. He was once afflicted with a disorder so curious, that he wrote out a statement of it (which is now to be found in "Nicholson's Philosophical Journal"), and laid it before the Royal Academy of Berlin. It appeared from this, that Nicholai was troubled with a painful and distressing disease, and this preying upon his mind, threw him into occasional fits of dejection. The continual recurrence of these at length weakened his constitution and affected his senses. He perceived shadows, or dark outlines of figures, in all positions before him, walking, sitting, and running; this per-

plexed him, but, as far as supernatural beings are concerned, did not alarm him, though he began to fear he was losing his reason. Nicholai was a philosopher, and remembering the reasoning of the quack in Moliere, tried it in his own case. "Where there are no men," said he, "there can be no shadows of men; therefore, I do not see these figures, but merely imagine I see them." This, however good, did not dissipate the illusion, and as he took no other means to rid himself of his unpleasant visitors, his malady increased: the figures now assumed the appearance of solidity and colour, and he could in no way distinguish them from really existing persons. The features were, in many cases, known to him; some were the apparitions of friends long dead, others of those in foreign climes; some of his then intimate acquaintances, others complete strangers. These distressing circumstances drove him for aid to medicine; his disease left him, and with it the figures, first gradually fading into shadows, and then in a week or two disappearing. But he was again attacked with his former disorder, and again the same unpleasant circumstances attended it; but his lowness of spirits being much increased by this second attack, he neglected to take any medicine at all. This conduct did not much tend to ameliorate his condition, and this time his spectral companions not only moved but spoke, and with some of them he held long conversations; but his acute intellect soon found out that all they said was but the echo of his own ideas, and from this he drew an additional proof of their actual nonentity. On

a second application to medical aid he completely recovered, and was never afterwards troubled in the same way. This is a species of disorder not so very rare as to excite wonder in the medical practitioner; at the same time it sets in a very strong light the nature of many ghost stories. Among those who have been at different times subjects of these strange hallucinations, have been the late Mr. Roscoe and a once popular minister of the crown.

CHAPTER III.

WITCHCRAFT.

The study of this branch of popular superstition, though despised by many who would fain be thought wise, will not be held in contempt by those qualified to judge of its importance. To ascertain how far, on this topic, the human mind has deviated from truth—how, in all ages, a sense of some powers intermediate between man and his Creator, has, notwithstanding that deviation, maintained its hold upon mankind—and to investigate subjects which often throw a strong light upon the Scriptures of truth, cannot be uninteresting. We shall therefore, in this chapter and the following, give a series of sketches of the principal branches of what has been sometimes called sorcery. This will include the doctrines and histories of Witchcraft, Familiar Spirits, and Demons, with their manners, or supposed manners of action; and on these, in the order in which we have named them, we shall now make a few observations.

Witchcraft implies a kind of sorcery, more especially prevalent among the female sex; the professors of which, by entering into a compact with infernal agencies, were supposed enabled to alter the course of the otherwise immutable laws by which Nature is governed, to raise tempests, to transport themselves at will to great distances, to transform themselves into

different shapes, to afflict and torment those who offended them; and, in short, by virtue of this supposed compact, to do whatsoever they pleased. These ideas have prevailed in all ages and in all countries, and we have to look to the sacred records for the earliest accounts of this phenomenon. Before giving an account of early Witchcraft, we must discriminate been Witchcraft and Magic; the one resting entirely on infernal aid, the other being, as we have seen, supposed to be power obtained by a deep acquaintance with the principles of Nature, so that her laws might be suspended, and her phenomena imitated and even rivalled.

Witchcraft, as vulgarly understood, is, perhaps, the most absurd system that the mind of man ever devised for belief; it supposes that those who were quite unable to live in comfort themselves, have yet the power of enriching or impoverishing others; that those, who tottered with age and languished with disease, were yet capable of bestowing health and of taking it away; and that those who had not the power to obtain one earthly attendant could command the spirits of the air and of hell. It supposes, likewise, that its professors had sold their souls to the powers of evil, without receiving either wealth, pleasure, youth, beauty, rank, or estimation in return; and that a few years of a gloomy existence, gifted with powers as gloomy, were purchased by an eternity of torment. These inconsistencies have been frequently noticed and never explained; and though stress has been laid on the prohibition in the Mosaic law, surely that law might be supposed, with propriety, directed

against pretenders; besides which, the word employed in the original signifies poisoners, and would probably never have been rendered *witches*, had not Witchcraft been so much in fashion during the middle centuries. It is doubtful whether Balaam is to be considered as a wizard or a magician; it seems that his conduct savours rather of magic than necromancy; but the case of the Witch of Endor is exactly in point. We do not know that she was an old woman—we have no reason to suppose her in poverty—indeed, from the circumstance of her killing a fatted calf for the king, it seems she was not so. But, as to her supernatural powers, we may ask, had she been prepared for the appearance of Samuel, would that appearance have caused her so great a terror? Had she possessed means of obtaining supernatural information, would she not have found out before, who it was who applied to her? Lastly, is it at all likely that the Almighty would have permitted the blessed spirit of a holy prophet to have been at the mercy of a wicked woman to disquiet him, as he emphatically expressed it, whenever she pleased? We do not mean to deny the appearance of Samuel, which evidently took place, but to maintain that his presence for that time was especially commanded by God; and the woman of Endor was both surprised and terrified at the unexpected result of her incantations.

The belief in this art, if it may be so called, subsisted for many thousand years, and during the height of this reign of ignorance, many cruel laws were enacted, by the operations of which, thousands of innocent persons (we speak without exaggeration),

many, nay, most of them friendless—oppressed with age, poverty, and disease, were condemned and burnt, for powers which they could not possess—for injuries which they could not cause, and for crimes which they could not commit. Happily for humanity, these terrific laws have long been repealed; an enlightened age viewed with horror the fanaticism of pagans and bigots, and gave proof of its own emancipation from the dark and murderous trammels of ignorance and barbarity, by a recantation of these creeds—creeds that had no other object in view than to stain the dignity of the creation, by bending down the human mind to the most abject state of degeneracy and servility. The deceptions of jugglers founded on optical illusions, a knowledge of the powers of electricity and magnetism, have done much to remove the veil of supernatural agency; oracles have been detected as mere machinery, modern miracles as sleight of hand, and many another solemn farce has shared the same fate.

To return, however, to our subject. The Greeks appear to have had their witches, but, for the most part, magic was the favourite science, and the magnificent tragedy of Medea stands as a mighty and imperishable monument of Greek genius as connected with description of supernatural powers. In the pages of Euripides, for once at least burning pages, we see the passionate and devoted character of the royal enchantress stand forth in glorious relief—we have unveiled the deep energies of her subtle and powerful spirit; we are whirled along by the hand of a master through the mazes of love, and hate, and

sorrow, and fearful revenge, till at length—wounded deeply in her tenderest affections, abandoned by her husband, and menaced with a deprivation of her children—the forsaken princess flings the reins up to her passions, calls around her the powers of magic, and fills with mourning and desolation the families by which she has been so deeply injured.

A few deeds attributed to her may be mentioned, rather to show their similarity to more modern tales than because they relate to the subject of witchcraft, as we have already attributed them to magic. After her marriage with Jason, she restored to youth Æson, his father, by opening his veins and infusing into them, instead of the blood which she extracted, a potent magical juice. The daughters of Pelias hearing of this, and seeing how well Æson looked, intreated Medea to do as much for Pelias, their father; and she, intending to avenge the wrongs of her husband's family upon the tyrannical old man, readily promised all they demanded. She told them to cut their father in pieces, and to boil him in a cauldron with certain herbs which she would send them. They hesitated at obeying so cruel a command; but, to prove her power and to dissipate their fears, she ordered them to take the oldest ram in their flock and to execute the same process upon him. The ram, quite decrepit and worn out with age, was killed, cut up, and put into the magical cauldron; Medea added the necessary herbs, and the cauldron was made to boil; presently the bleating of a lamb was heard within, and soon the ram leaped out before them, young and strong. In order to show the

revivifying powers of her mixture, Medea threw it over the wintry ground, and flowers and grass immediately sprung up where it fell. After so astounding a proof, the daughters of Pelias had no longer any objection to boil their father; but they boiled the cauldron dry without restoring him to life; and Medea, laughing at their vain attempts, and vainer sorrow, mounted her dragons, and disappeared from their sight. We will just notice the death of Glauce, the wife of Jason, after he forsook Medea, and thus close our remarks upon this most extraordinary enchantress:—she sent her rival a golden crown, which was no sooner placed on her brows than the unfortunate princess was burnt to ashes by a magic and inextinguishable fire.

The poetry of the Augustan age contains some curious allusions to the subject: from this, and from Lucan and Apuleius, we learn that witches pretended to raise the bodies of the dead, cause the spirit to reanimate them, and compel them to answer questions concerning the past, the present, and the future. Like their sisters in England, they were said to make images of persons to whom they wished ill, and, subjecting these images to all manner of torments, caused the unfortunate prototypes to feel the pain. In the Æthiopics of Heliodorus there is a scene imitated from that episode of Erichtho in Lucan's Pharsalia. Calesiris, an Egyptian priest, and Chariclea, the heroine of this proto-romance, being obliged to rest for a night on a field of battle, covered with the bodies of the dead, they behold an old woman who resuscitates with many hideous rites a

dead body, that of her own son, and causes it to answer various questions, — at length, enraged at being so "disquieted," the spirit predicts that the old woman will in the course of a few minutes perish, and also declares what will be the fate of Chariclea. The old woman, finding that there have been witnesses to her abominable doings, hurries about to find them that she may kill them; while so doing she falls down on a spear and instantly expires.[1]

In England, we find, in a very early period, Merlin, who, though a magician, seems to have had somewhat of witchcraft to answer for: this was first discovered in consequence of Vortigern wishing to build a tower on a particular spot; this he found he could not do, and going to his counsellors for advice, they told him that the stones must be sprinkled with the blood of a man born without a father. Merlin was found, who had no *mortal* father, and he explained the mystery to the king, by stating that there was a lake beneath the tower which rendered the building unsteady; and, in addition to this, that in this lake were two dragons contending, one red and one white, which he stated to typify the contention between the Britons and the Saxons. We are told that he made the stones of Stonehenge move into their places by charm and spell, or, as it is beautifully and poetically phrased by the romancers of that period, by "word of power." Of the witchcraft of Merlin we know little, though we hear much of his magic.

We must not omit, however, the other Merlin.

"Merlin, the wild," we are informed by Leyden,

[1] Book vi.

was one of the earliest poets of the south of Scotland, and was once of far greater consideration as a poet than at present. Poole, in his English Parnassus, calls Homer the Grecian Merlin. He is said to have flourished between the years 530 and 590. According to some accounts he was born at Caerwertheven, near the forest of Calydon. This is probably Carnwath, as Merlin mentions Lanark in his poems. He studied under the famous Taliessin, and became equally illustrious as a poet and a warrior. He was present at the battle of Atterith in 577, where he had the misfortune to slay his nephew; and, being soon after seized with madness, he buried himself in the forests of the south of Scotland, where, in the lucid intervals of his frenzy, he lamented in wild strains his unhappy condition. 'I am a wild, terrible screamer; raiment covers me not; affliction wounds me not; my reason is gone with the gloomy spirits of the mountain, and I myself am sad.' In his 'Apple Trees' he describes the beautiful orchard which his prince had bestowed upon him as a reward of his prowess in battle. 'Seven score and seven are the fragrant apple-trees; equal in age, height, and magnitude; branching wide, and high as a grove of the forest, crowned with lovely foliage; growing on the sunny slope of a green hill; guarded by a lovely nymph with pearly teeth.' The recollection of this gift is excited by the view of an apple-tree, under which he appears to have rested during his frenzy. He describes it as a 'majestic tree, loaded with the sweetest fruit, growing in the sequestered recesses of the forests of Calydon, shading all, itself

unshaded.' With the recollection of his former situation returns his regret, and he complains to his lonely apple-tree 'that he is hated by the warriors, and despised by the snowy swans of the Britons, who would formerly have wished to recline like the harp in his arms.' Then, in a bold prophetic strain he announces the return of Modred, and of 'Arthur, monarch of the martial host. Again shall they rush to the battle of Camlan. Two days swells the sound of the conflict, and only seven escape from the slaughter.' Atterith, the scene of the great battle in which Merlin wore the golden torques, or chain of honour, is probably Ettrick, and the celebrated Camlan, in the neighbourhood of Falkirk, where Camelon, the ancient capital of the Picts, is generally placed. The grave of Merlin has been placed by tradition at Drummelzier, in Tweeddale, beneath an aged thorn-tree. The most striking incidents in his life have been collected in a poem by Geoffrey of Monmouth, called 'Vita Merlini Caledonii;' which, in spite of the barbarism of the age, apparent in the metrical structure, as well as in the poverty and inelegance of the phraseology, displays in some passages a pleasing simplicity of description, and a selection of wild and striking images."[1]

Next to Merlin in rank as well as in antiquity stands Michael Scott; who, though like Merlin called a wizard, was not accused of witchcraft, but of magic and alchemy, on which subjects he wrote many treatises which are said to be, or have been, buried with him at Melrose Abbey. That he was

[1] Leyden's Remains, pp. 299, 300.

a man of profound and extensive learning is unquestionable, and there yet remain several works which he wrote at the request of the Emperor Frederic II., who much patronized him. Alexander III. of Scotland, who made him a knight, and Edward II. of England, were among those who honoured him with their esteem. His grave, and the books it was thought to contain, are beautifully introduced by a mightier magician—Sir Walter Scott—in the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." The wonderful deeds of Michael Scott were, until the last few years, the favorite subjects of winter-evening tales among the Scottish peasantry, who never mentioned the name of their great enchanter but with terror and respect. Of the latter he was well worthy for his great and varied attainments.

The Welsh also, as well as the English and Scotch, boast their wizard. At a period rather later flourished Owen Glendower; and he, according to tradition, was really a wizard, that is, he derived his power from an infernal source. He is said to have made a compact with the devil, by virtue of which, he having all the benefit of supernatural power on earth, when he died, provided always the fiend did not kill him, his soul was to be forfeited; and this was to take place whether he was buried in a church or out of a church. This singular agreement was properly signed, sealed, and delivered on both sides. Owen Glendower had sovereignty over all the spirits of the air, and by their aid became both great and famous; but he had not the slightest intention of performing his part of the agreement—

he directed that after his death he should be buried neither in a church nor out of a church, but under the church wall, so that the precautions of the evil one were all in vain, and he was cheated at last. This is not the spirit, at least the ordinary spirit, of witchcraft.

In common parlance, a witch was a poor aged woman, generally a widow; elderly maiden ladies seem seldom to have been suspected, though we have some instances of suspicion falling on younger ones. Now, though in legends, poems, and ballads these beings make a very imposing figure, yet when we come to read of them in more sober records, we find them worthy only of the most sincere pity. Some poor old woman who was thought ugly, and who happened to have a black cat or a raven, was suspected of causing all the mischief which took place for miles around. Did a farmer lose his cattle, did a thunder-storm turn his beer sour, did his butter turn out badly, or his mastiff grow mad, it must be the work of a witch; some persons vomited pins, and others were afflicted with rheumatism, and all through her incantations.

Wierus speaks of a certain butcher who contracted, in the year 1564, for the hides of all the cattle that died a natural death in a town near Willenburg. He continued by poison to destroy such numbers, that he became in a short time incredibly rich. At last suspicion was excited; he confessed the deed, and was put to death in a mode too horrible for the imagination—his flesh was torn off his bones with red hot pincers. Reginald Scott, commenting upon this

story, remarks, "We, for our parts, would have *killed five poor women* before we could even *suspect one rich butcher*."[1]

In Montrol's life of Brissot an anecdote is given of Lord Mansfield which is curious. On going the circuit, Lord Mansfield had one day a poor old woman brought before him under an accusation of witchcraft. Though exceedingly infirm, it was asserted by all the inhabitants of the village in which she resided, whose positiveness was, in all probability, in exact proportion to the absurdity of what they advanced, that she had been seen walking with her feet in the air and her head downwards. The witnesses exhibited the greatest eagerness that she should be punished as a witch. The judge, after listening with the greatest composure to the depositions of the witnesses, observed, with a grave and solemn countenance, "Since you have seen this poor woman walking in the air, though her legs are scarcely able to support her on the earth, I can, of course, entertain no doubt of the fact; but this witch is an Englishwoman, and subject as well as you and I to the laws of England, *every one of which I have just run over in my mind*, without being able to hit upon any one which prohibits persons from walking in the air if they should find it convenient. All those persons, therefore, who have seen the accused perform her aërial promenades are at liberty to imitate her example. They have an undoubted right to do so, and I will guarantee the most perfect impunity: they shall no more be considered guilty than this

[1] Disc. of Witchcraft, book vi. chap. 4.

woman, whom I now pronounce innocent, and command that she be set at liberty."

The point being settled that any unhappy accused person was really a witch (for how could such wonders as we have related exist without witchcraft?), the next question was how to punish the witch, and to recover the bewitched (we do not specify instances, for it will be found, on recurring to Scott's "Demonology and Witchcraft," that all witches were accused of the same things). These two were inseparable, for when the witch was destroyed, the patients recovered of themselves. First, then, to prove that the unfortunate wretch was under the devil's especial protection (and truly the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel), they pricked her all over with pins, in order to find out the witch's mark, which was thought to be insensible; they then tied her hands together, and, wrapping her in a sheet, plunged her into a pool of water—if the poor creature sank, she was innocent, and was commonly drowned; if she swam, she was a witch, and was either beaten or burnt to death on being taken out of the water. These monstrous customs were regularly authorized by law in the time of James I., and then there were regular witch-finders, whose business it was to hunt down poor old women, and sometimes poor old men; and, as they were paid for every witch they found, it was their interest to put to death all the unfortunate objects of suspicion that fell into their hands. It is said that after having used a real pin for some time in their tortures, they would at last substitute a mock pin, which had the point sliding into a groove

when it appeared to enter the flesh, such as is used by jugglers in their deceptions; so that if the previous torture failed to induce the poor wretches to confess, in order to shorten and mitigate their sufferings, they might convict them by means of this diabolical invention: for the old woman, not feeling the pain which was no longer inflicted, was proved to be a witch, and in consequence burnt. But some account will be interesting of the work written by the English Solomon, as he delighted to be called.

King James I.'s Demonology is divided into three books, and is written in the form of a dialogue between two persons, called respectively, Philomathis and Epistemon. In the preface his majesty very stoutly abuses those who differ from his royal judgment. He writes, he says, "principally against the damnable opinions of two, principally in this age, whereof the one called Scott (our old friend Reginald) is not ashamed in print to deny that there can be such a thing as witchcraft, and so maintains the old error of the Sadducees in denying of spirits; the other called Wierus, a German physician, sets out a public apology for all these crafty folks, whereby procuring for them impunity. He plainly betrays that he hath been one of that profession; and for to make this treatise the more pleasant and facile, I have put it in form of a dialogue, which I have divided in three books,—the first speaking of Magic in general, and of Necromancy in special; the second, of Sorcery and Witchcraft; and the third contains a discourse of all these kinds of spirits and

spectres that appear and trouble persons, together with a conclusion of the whole work. My intention in this labour is only to prove two things, as I have already said. The one, that such devilish arts have been, and are. The second, what exact trial and severe punishment they merit." He takes leave of his readers in these words:—"And so, wishing my pains in this treatise, beloved reader, to be effeetual in arming all them that read the same against these above-mentioned errors, and recommending my good will to thy friendly acceptation, I bid thee heartily farewell. James R." In the first ehapter he discourses about the woman of Endor. "That it was not the spirit of Samuel, I grant, in the proving whereof ye need not to insist, since all Christians of whatsoever religion agrees upon that, and none but mere ignorant, or witches, or neeromanciers, doubts thereof; but that the devil is permitted sometimes to put himself in the likeness of the saints is plain in the Scriptures, where it is said, that Satan doth transform himself into an angel of light."

In the second ehapter he declares that Magie is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and then proceeds to divide the "unhappy art" into two branehes, "whereof one is called Magie or Necromaney, the other Sorcerie or Witeheraft. In the third chapter he distinguishes between them thus:—"Surely the difference the vulgar put between them is very merry, and in a manner true, for they say that the witches are servants only, and slaves to the devil; but the necromaneers are his masters and commanders." In the fourth chapter he states Astrology

to be the root of Physiognomy, and all kinds of divination.

In the fifth chapter he says, speaking of Conjuration, "Two principal things cannot well in that errand be wanting,—holy water (whereby the devil mocks the papists), and the present of some living thing unto him. There are likewise certain seasons, days, and hours, that they observe in this purpose. These things being all ready and prepared, circles are made triangular, quadrangular, round, double, or single, according to the form of apparition they may crave. But to speak of the divers forms of the circles; of the innumerable characters and crosses that are within and without, and out through the same; of the divers forms of apparitions that the crafty spirit illudes them with; and of all such particulars in that action, I remit it to over many that have busied their heads in describing the same, as being but curious, and altogether unprofitable. And thus far only I touch, that when the conjured spirit appears, which will not be while (or till) after many circumstances, long prayers, and much muttering and mummery of the conjurors, like a papist priest dispatching a hunting mass; how soon I say he appears if they have missed one iota of all their rites, or if any of their feet once slide over the circle, through terror of his fearful apparition, he pays himself at that time in his own hand of that due debt which they owe him, and otherwise would have delayed longer to pay him. I mean, he carries them with him body and soul. If this be not now a just cause to make them weary of these forms of con-

juration, I leave it to you to judge, upon considering the lonesomeness of the labour, the precise keeping of days and hours, as I have said, the terribleness of the apparition, and the present peril they stand in in missing the least circumstance or freite that they ought to observe; and, on the other part, the devil is glad to move them to a plain and square dealing with him, as I said before."

But the most important chapter is that which concludes the treatise, viz., the sixth of the third book, that is intituled, "Of the trial and punishment of witches. What sort of accusation might be admitted against them, and what is the cause of their increasing so far of their number in this age?" Then says

"*Philomathes.* To make an end of our conference, since it draws late, what form of punishment think ye merit these magicians and witches, for I see ye account them to be all alike guilty?

"*Epistemon.* They ought to be put to death, according to the law of God, the civil and imperial law, and the municipal laws of all Christian nations.

"*P.* But, what kind of death, I pray you?

"*E.* It is commonly used by fire; but that is an indifferent thing, to be used in every country according to the law or custom thereof.

"*P.* But, ought no sex, age, nor rank, to be excepted?

"*E.* None at all, being so used by the lawful magistrate; for it is the highest point of idolatry, wherein no exception is admitted by the law of God.

"*P.* Then bairns may not be spared?

"*E.* Yea; but not a hair the less of my conclusion, for they are no that capable of reason as to practise such things; and for any being in a company, and not revealing thereof, their less and ignorant age will no doubt excuse them.

"*P.* I see ye condemn them all that are of the counsel of such crafts.

"*E.* No doubt; for, as I said, speaking of Magic, the consulters, trusters in, overseers, entertainers, and stirrers up of these craftsfolk are equally guilty of that craft with themselves that are the practisers.

"*P.* Whether may the prince, then, or supreme magistrate spare, or oversee, any that are guilty of this craft, upon some great respects known to him?

"*E.* The prince, or magistrate, for further trial's cause, may continue the punishing them such a certain space as he thinks convenient; but, in the end, to spare the life, and not to strike when God bids strike, and so severely to punish in so odious a fault and treason against God, is not only unlawful, but is doubtless as much so in that magistrate, as it was in Saul's sparing Agag, and so comparable to the sin of witchcraft itself.

"*P.* Surely, then, I think, since this crime ought to be so severely punished, judges ought to beware to condemn any but such as they are sure are guilty; neither should the clattering report of a carling serve on so weighty a case.

"*E.* Judges ought, indeed, to beware whom they condemn; for it is as great a crime, as Solomon saith, to condemn the innocent, as to let the guilty escape free; neither ought the report of any one

infamous person be admitted as sufficient proof, which can stand of no law.

"*P.* And what may then a number of guilty persons' confessions work against one that is accused?

"*E.* The assize must serve for interpreter of our law in that respect. But, in my opinion, since, in a matter of treason against the prince, bairns, or wives, or never so defamed persons, may of our law serve for sufficient witnesses and proofs, I think surely that by a far greater reason such witnesses may be sufficient in matters of treason against God; for who but witches can be proofs, and so witnesses of the doings of witches?

"*P.* Indeed, I trow they will be loth to put any honest man upon their counsel. But, what if they accuse folks to have been present at their imaginary conventions in the spirit when their bodies be senseless, as ye have said?

"*E.* I think they are not a hair the less guilty, for the devil durst never have borrowed their shadows or similitudes to such a turn, if their consent had not been at it, and the consent in these times is death of the law.

"*P.* Then Samuel was a witch; for the devil resembled his shape and played his person in giving response to Saul.

"*E.* Samuel was dead as well before that, so that no one can slander him with meddling with that unlawful act. For the cause why, as I take it, that God will not permit Satan to use the shapes or similitudes of any innocent persons at such unlawful times, is that God will not permit that any innocent

person should be slandered with that vile defection; for then the devil would find ways enow to calumniate the best, and this we have on proof by them that are carried away with the Phairie, who never saw the shadows of any in that court, but of them that thereafter are tried to have been brethren and sisters of that craft. And this was likewise proved by the confession of a young lasse troubled with spirits, laid on her by witchcraft, that although she saw the shapes of divers men and women troubling her, and naming the persons whom those shadows represent, yet never one of them are found to be innocent, but all clearly tried to be most guilty, and for the most part confessing the same; and besides this, I think it hath seldom been heard tell of, that any whom persons guilty of that crime accused, as having been known to them to be their marrows by eye-sight and not by hearsay; but such as were so accused of witchcraft could not be clearly tried upon them, men at least publicly known to be of very evil life and reputation.[1] So jealous is God, I say, of the fame of them that are innocent on such causes, and besides that, there are two other good helps which may be used for their weal—one is the finding their marks, and the trying the unsensibleness thereof—the other is their floating on the water—for as in a secret murder, if the dead carcase be at any time thereafter handled by the murderer, it will gush out with blood as if the blood were crying out to Heaven to be avenged on the murderer; God having appointed that secret supernatural sign for trial of that secret

[1] This sentence stands here as written in the King's book.

unnatural crime, so it appears that God hath appointed (for a supernatural sign of the monstrous impiety of witches) that the water should refuse to receive those in her bosom who have shaken off the sacred water of baptism, and wilfully refused the benefit thereof. No not so much as their eyes are able to shed tears, threaten and torture them so much as ever you will, while (unless) first they repent, God not permitting them to dissemble their obstinacy in so horrible a crime; albeit the women-kind, liable specially at other times to shed tears at every light occasion, when they will, yea, although it were dissemblingly, like the crocodiles.

"*P.* Well, we have made this conference to last as long as leisure would permit, and to conclude, then, since I am to take my leave of you, I pray God to purge this county of these devilish practices, for they were never so rife in these parts as they are now.

"*E.* I pray God that so be, too, but the causes are over-manifest that make them to be so rife; for the great wickedness of the people, on the one part, procures this horrible defection, whereby God justly punisheth some by a greater iniquity, and, on the other part, the consummation of the world and our deliverance drawing near, make Satan to urge the more in his instruments, knowing his kingdom to be so near an end. And now farewell for this time."[1]

Witches were supposed to be rendered powerless by passing a running stream, by stepping over

[1] This book is only a tract of forty-six small folio pages, large print; about thirty pages of a novel of Scott.

straws so as to form the sign of the cross; by nailing a horse-shoe to a door, they could not cross that threshold. By cutting their foreheads into a cross they lost their power for a while; there were also many other means of defence, equally cruel and equally ridiculous, which were put into exercise against them. They had their nocturnal meetings, called "the witches' sabbaths," a subject which Hogg has made the theme of, perhaps, the most splendid ballad extant, to wit, "The Witch of Fife;" and Satan was supposed to make his appearance among them in the shape of some monstrous beast.

The annals of Scottish witchcraft present us with some terrific pictures of human depravity. Of persons accused of sorcery few were more celebrated than William Lord Soulis, a powerful Scottish Baron, who in the reign of Robert Bruce aspired to the throne of Scotland. He is represented as a cruel tyrant and wizard, constantly employed in harassing his neighbours, oppressing his vassals, and fortifying his castle of Hermitage against the king. For this purpose he employed all means, human and infernal, invoking the fiends by his incantations, and forcing his vassals to drag materials like beasts of burden. Irritated by repeated complaints made of Lord Soulis' cruelty and injustice, tradition relates that the king peevishly exclaimed to a party of petitioners, "Boil him, if you please; but let me hear no more of him." Satisfied with this answer, they proceeded with the utmost haste to execute the commission, which they accomplished by boiling him alive at a place called Nine-Stane-Rigg, in a cauldron said to

have been long preserved at Skelf Hill, a hamlet between Hawick and Hermitage. Messengers, it is said, were immediately despatched by the king to prevent the effects of such a hasty declaration, but they only arrived in time to witness the conclusion of the ceremony. The castle of Hermitage, unable to support the load of iniquity which had been long accumulating within its walls, is supposed to have sunk partly beneath the ground, and its ruins are still regarded by the peasants with peculiar aversion and horror. The door of the chamber where Lord Soulis is said to have held his conferences with the evil spirits is supposed to be opened once in seven years by that demon, to whom, when he left the castle never to return, Lord Soulis committed the keys, by throwing them over his left shoulder, and desiring him to keep them till he came back. Into this chamber, which is really the dungeon of the castle, the peasant is afraid to look, for such is the active malignity of its inmate that a willow inserted at the chinks of the door is found peeled or stripped of its bark when drawn back Nine-Stane-Rigg derives its name from a druidical circle, of which nine stones were, till a late period, visible; there are now only five, and two of these are pointed out as those which supported the iron bar upon which the fatal cauldron was suspended. Thus runs tradition; the real facts of the case were as follows:—Lord Soulis was seized at Berwick, when he was attended by three hundred and sixty squires and many knights, and, confessing his treason, his life was spared, but his estates confiscated, and he himself confined in Dumbarton Castle,

where he died. Though the tradition of the boiling is not correct with regard to Lord Soulis, yet all the circumstances were fulfilled in the case of Melville, of Glenbervie, sheriff of the Mearns, in the reign of James I. of Scotland.[1]

We must now take a few characteristic anecdotes of witchcraft, according to the most distinguished continental authors. Heiningus Grosius, in his "Magica de Spectris Apparitionibusque," tells us of a witch who used to get a very good living by her arts, and she is the only instance on record of a witch doing so. It was her custom, when she had sold any horses, for that was her trade, to make off and never again to appear in that neighbourhood. But at Leipsic, having sold several, and given particular directions to the purchasers not to take the animals to the water for three days, one man was tempted, by the unusual nature of the requisition, to disobey. He mounted the beautiful courser, which he had purchased at a very cheap rate, and set off to the water; no sooner had he driven the horse into the water than it disappeared, and the astonished owner found himself sitting upon a bundle of straw. He immediately returned from the stream, and went to the inn, where he found the witch, who it seems had nothing suspicious in her appearance, sleeping on a sofa. He tried to wake her, but in vain; till taking her by one leg he determined to pull her off, but to his utter astonishment the leg came off, though the lady declined waking, and the victimized purchaser, more than ever terrified, sought safety in

[1] Leyden's Remains, p. 56, and Scott's notes on Leyden.

flight. The witch was traced and at last captured, when she was, as usual at that period, condemned to the stake. She was accordingly hanged, and a fire kindled underneath, but to the equal horror and surprise of those about, the criminal was no longer visible, only a bundle of straw hanging among the flames. Again and again the witch was caught and hanged, but still escaped burning till they thought of blessing the gallows and the halter, and then the sentence of the law took its full effect.

The charms which are to be found in every book treating of Witchcraft and Magic, are so numerous, and, at the same time, so uninteresting, that it would be scarcely possible for any but a believer to read them through. Old Reginald Scott is one of the very few writers on these topics, whose pages are pleasant reading. He gives an agreeable sprinkling of comic anecdotes and facetious remarks, which arise naturally from his subject, and keep it, as it were, above water. Some of these will be worth quoting, were it only to serve the same purpose again:—

"Leonardus Vairus saith that there was a prayer extant, whereby might be carried, in a sieve, water or other liquor. I think it was *clam clay*, which a crow taught a maid, who was promised a cake of so great quantity as might be kneaded of so much flour as she could wet with the water which she brought in a sieve; and by that means she clammed it with clay, and brought in so much water as whereby she had a great cake, and so beguiled her sisters."[1]

Again—"A certain miller found all the eels stolen

[1] Book xii. chap. 16.

out of his milldam, and went and complained to the priest of the parish, little thinking that Sir John (for priests were then entitled Sir) had himself, with some friends, been the aggressor. Sir John promised that he would, on the next Sunday, so curse the thief and all his confederates, that they should have but small joy of their fish. When the time appointed came, Sir John, in full canonicals, pronounced the following awful curse, which was no doubt greatly edifying to the congregation, and no less satisfactory to the miller, because the priest alone understood its import—

> "All you that have stolen the miller's eelis,
> Laudate Dominum de cœlis—
> And all they that have consented thereto,
> Benedicamus Domino.[1]

"Lo! saith he, there is sauce for your eeles, my masters!"

Once more—The Devil (qui n'est jamais si noir qu'on le peint) once told St. Bernard that there were in the Psalter seven verses, which would infallibly save from perdition any one who recited them daily. "Which are they?" said St. Bernard. "Nay," replied Satan, "you can hardly expect me to reveal a fact which would make against my own interests so materially." "It matters not," was the spirited reply; "for, if you will not tell me, I will recite the whole Psalter daily." "That," said the devil, "will be worse still, far by. So doing, you will lay up a stock of merit for others. I will tell you the verses,"—and for once he kept his word. Then referring to the efficacy of St. John's Gospel as a charm, he adds:—"but if

[1] Book xii. chap. 17.

the hanging of St. John's Gospel about the neck be so beneficial, how if one were to eat up the same?"[1]

To give other examples of witchcraft would be needless: it is but to refer to the amusing work already so often quoted. Yet there is one thing connected intimately with witchcraft which cannot pass altogether unnoticed; it is the fact, that though every witch had a familiar spirit, many who were not witches were similarly attended. Of this class appear to be the Scotch Bodach Glass, and the Irish Banshee—melancholy spirits who foretell death and desolation in the families over which they watch. This is a very ancient idea, that of attending spirits. Socrates always attributed much to his good genius. Iphigeneia, in the tragedy, Iphigeneia in Aulis of Euripides, exclaims:—

> "Αει μοι δυςδαίμονα
> Μητρος της εμης ζωνης."

And the spirit which appeared to Brutus in his tent, shook the heart of the gloomy regicide by the announcement: "I am thine evil genius, thou shalt see me again at Philippi." Wild and extraordinary as this doctrine may appear, it is, at all events, apparently supported by that singular expression of our Saviour concerning children: "Their angels do continually behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven." We confess that the passage in question is difficult to understand, but it suggests some close and mysterious connexion with a better and a brighter world. These are subjects upon which speculation would lead us whither we know not. "Here we see through a glass darkly."

[1] Book xii. chap. 18.

CHAPTER IV.

WITCHCRAFT AMONG BARBAROUS NATIONS.

No people in the world, in ancient or modern times, appear to have been more superstitious than the South Sea islanders, or to have been more entirely under the influence of dread from imaginary dæmons or supernatural beings. They had not only their major but their minor deities, and all the minute ramifications of idolatry, sorcery, and witchcraft, were extensively practised. By this art the sorcerers pretended to be able to inflict the most painful maladies, and to deprive of life the victims of their mysterious rites.

"Witchcraft and sorcery," says Ellis, "they considered the province of an inferior order of supernatural beings. The names of the principal of these oramatuas or dæmons were Mau-ri, Bua-rai, and Tea-fero. They were considered the most malignant of beings, exceedingly irritable and implacable; they were not confined to the skulls of departed warriors, or the images made for them, but were occasionally supposed to resort to shells on the sea-shore, especially the beautiful murex ramoces. These shells were kept by the sorcerers, and the peculiar singing noise perceived on applying the valve to the ear, was imagined to proceed from the demon it contained."[1]

[1] Polyn. Res. vol. ii. p. 227.

Incantations sometimes commenced by an imprecation or curse, either by the priest or the offended party, and it was usually denounced in the name of the gods of the party, or of the king, or of some oramatua. This was generally employed in revenge for an injury or insult which the party using the imprecation imagined they had received, and the poor people entertained the greatest horror of this mode of vengeance, as it was generally considered fatal, unless by engaging a more powerful demon its effects could be counteracted. It was necessary to secure something connected with the body of the object of vengeance. The parings of the nails, a lock of the hair, a portion of the saliva or other secretions, or else *some of the food* which the person was to eat. This was considered as the vehicle by which the demon entered into the person, who afterwards became possessed. It was called the "tubu," growing or causing to grow. The sorcerer took the "tubu and performed his incantations over it, the demon was then supposed to enter into it, and by its means into the person; but if the tubu were food it did not operate until it had been eaten by the party for whose mischief it was intended." To avoid these incantations they used every precaution, carefully burying the cuttings of the hair, and the parings of the nails, and furnishing each individual with a distinct basket for food.

When the tara had been performed, and the tubu secured, the effects were violent, and death speedy. The most acute agonies and terrible distortions of the body were often experienced; the wretched sufferer

appeared in a state of frantic madness, or, as they expressed it, 'torn by the evil spirit,' while he foamed and writhed under his dreadful power.[1]

"The imprecation was seldom openly denounced, unless the agent of the powers of darkness imagined his victim had little prospect of escape, and that his family were not likely to avenge his death. In general these mysteries were conducted with that secrecy which best comported with such works of darkness. Occasionally the magician employed his influence with the evil spirit to revenge some insult or injury he or his relatives had received, but he more frequently exercised it for hire. From his employers he received his fee, and his directions, and having procured the tubu or instrument of acting on his victim, repaired to his own rude marae, performed his diabolical rites, delivered over the individual to the demon, whom he invoked, imploring the spirit to enter into the wretch, and inflict the most dreadful bodily sufferings, terminate at length the mortal existence, and then hurry the spirit to the state of night, there to pursue the dreadful work of torture.

It is possible that, in some instances, these sufferings may have been the effects of imagination, and a deep impression on the mind of the afflicted individual, that he was selected as the victim of some insatiable demon's rage. Imagining he was already delivered to his grasp, hope was abandoned, death seemed inevitable, and the infatuated sufferer became the victim of despair. It is also possible that poison of which the natives had several kinds, vegetable and

[1] Ellis' Polyn. Res. vol. ii. pp. 227, 228, 229.

animal (some few of which they have stated capable of destroying animal life), might have produced the violent convulsions that sometimes preceded dissolution. It is probable that into the piece of food, over which the sorcerer performed his incantations, he introduced a portion of poison which would prove fatal to the individual by whom it was eaten. Indeed, some of the sorcerers, since their conversion to Christianity, and one of them on his death-bed confessed that this had been practised, and that they supposed the poison had occasioned the death which had been attributed to their incantations.[1]

"It is a singular fact that, while the practice continued with all its supernatural influence among the natives, the sorcerers invariably confessed that incantations were harmless when employed upon Europeans; several have more than once been threatened with sorcery, and there is reason to believe it has been put to the test upon them" (of course not poison). Supposing that the evil spirits were susceptible of bribes, "when any one was suffering from incantations, if he or his friends possessed property, they immediately employed another sorcerer. This person was called a faatre (causing to move or slide) who, on receiving his fee, was generally desired first to discover who had practised the incantations, which it was supposed had induced the sufferings; as soon as he had accomplished this, he was employed with more costly presents to engage the aid of his demons, that the agony and death they had endeavoured to inflict upon the subject of their malignant efforts

[1] Ellis' Polyn. Res. vol. ii. pp. 231, 232.

might revert to themselves; and, if the demon employed by the second party was equally powerful with that employed by the first, and their presents larger and more valuable, it was generally supposed they were successful."[1]

The Greenlanders, too, in their cold northern regions, were believers in an infinite variety of spiritual beings: they had their kongensetokit, or spirits of the sea, who fed on the foxes which came down to catch fish on the strand. Their sunnersoil, or mountain spirits, and their innuarolits or dwarfs, from whom, like the Scandinavians, they believed they had received a knowledge of the arts. They had a tradition of the deluge, and that the inhabitants of the world who then perished were afterwards permitted to animate flames of fire,[2] and to sport about the earth. They are seen in the shape of *ignes fatui.* The very air was a living essence, and might be kindled to anger by untoward actions. Ghosts, too, and spectres were ever in their thoughts. All monstrous births were turned to frightful spirits and scared away the fowls and seals, while a more amiable interest was taken in the affairs of mortals by their own departed relations. A boy, says Capt. Egede, who was playing with other boys on the plains in broad day was taken hold of by his mother, who had been buried in that place, and addressed with the following words among others:—"Do not be frightened, I am thy

[1] Ellis' Polyn. Res. vol. ii. p. 233.

[2] Like the Scotch daoine shi—these ingnersoit, or spirits of fire, were often accused of carrying off men and women to augment their own ranks, and this was considered a fate by no means desirable, though the spirits behaved with great kindness towards their new associates.

mother and love thee. Thou wilt live with strange people, who will instruct thee concerning him who made heaven and earth." The mode by which a man can become an angekok or sorcerer is to get some spirit to be his torngak, or familiar, and marvellous tales are told of the way in which an intercourse is effected. The aspirant to such commerce must for a long time renounce the company of mankind, and it is possible that, by the fasting and watching required by the separation from society, and by the constant direction of his thoughts to this one object, his mind becomes impressed with feelings, and his imagination peopled with phantoms which induce him to believe his desire granted. Some merely sit upon a consecrated stone and call on torngarsuk (their chief god), when he appears the implorer dies, and remains dead three days. During this time his spirit is supposed to be instructed by his torngak, or familiar spirit, is conducted to heaven and to hell, and is made a partaker of supernatural wisdom. This subsequent interview between the angekok and the torngak always takes place by night in autumn or winter, for then the rainbow, which they esteem the first heaven, is nearest to the earth. The devotee first drums for a considerable time on a magic drum, distorting his features and his limbs till he is exhausted, and then prepares for the interview. His pupils now tie his head between his knees, and his hands behind his back: then the lamps are all put out, and the house closed. Those who remain with the sorcerer must sit in a profound stillness for some time,—then the angekok begins to sing in which all the rest join with him; and he soon

mingles with the song sighs, groans, and panting. At last he calls aloud for the torngak, and the voices of those present sink into silence. Till the spirit comes the angekok continues to cry and suffer convulsions; and if a long time elapses, he falls down and his soul is (they say) sent to fetch the refractory torngak. By and by the soul returns with shouts of joy, and with the noise of rustling like that of birds flying over head. A person who had several times witnessed this ceremony told the Danish Moravian missionaries—"That it was exactly as if he had heard several birds come flying first over the house and afterwards into it." Sometimes, however, the torngak comes voluntarily, and in this case he remains without the room. The angekok converses with him there, and then are distinctly heard two different voices, one without and another within. The answer is always intricate, and if the hearers cannot unriddle it to their satisfaction they respectfully beg the torngak to vouchsafe them a more explicit answer.

It sometimes happens that another torngak comes, who is not the familiar spirit of the angekok officiating, and in this case neither the sorcerer nor the hearers understand what is meant. Then they are obliged to wait and see what the event is, and when they know that, it becomes easy to see what the torngak must have meant. When the angekok is consulted to cure a patient who is desperately ill, then he says it will be necessary for him to go to the realm of souls. This journey is performed in company with the torngak on a long string, and its object is either to consult the fæt or famous sages,

on the disease, or to bring a new soul for the patient. Sometimes he has to go to the goddess of hell to dissipate enchantments, and on these occasions, when the soul of the sorcerer returns, he cries out aloud and begins to beat his drum, for his pupils at his first cry cut the strings which confine his hands, and he forthwith tells not a short story of all that he has witnessed: he then recommences his song, and communicating his benediction with a touch, dismisses his audience, the lamps are lighted, and he is seen so wan and fatigued as to be scarcely able to speak. It is not every Greenlander who succeeds in this art, and if any one drums ten times in vain for his torngak he must resign his office; but after practising magic with success for a certain time, he may be advanced to a degree still higher, and be called a angekok poglik. To attain this rank he is laid in a dark house and provided with a drum. If torngarsuk esteems him worthy of the honour, a white bear comes in answer to his drumming and singing, takes him by the toe and drags him into the sea. Here he is devoured by the white bear and a sea-lion, but shortly after they bring up his limbs and replace them in the dark house, his soul comes again to animate them, and he himself is one of the "fæt or famous sages."

The way in which the angekoks exercise their art is sometimes very laughable. Their mode of deciding whether a sick person will live or die, is by tying a string round his head and lifting it up: if it be light, they pronounce that he will speedily recover; if it feel heavy, it is a token of death. If they are asked

about the welfare of an absent person, they go to his nearest relation and lift up his head with a stick over a tub of water: if the party be well, he appears reflected in the water sitting up in his kajak, or boat, and rowing; if he be dead, his kajak appears upset. Sometimes an angekok will summon the soul of an absent person to come before him in the dark; he will then pretend to wound the spirit, and it is supposed that the party will shortly die a lingering death. The voice of the person thus enchanted will be heard by the company present. This is not very different from the practice of witches elsewhere, who by tormenting an image thought, or were thought, to affect the individual for whom the image was made. But, besides the angekoks, there were also an inferior species of sorcerers called illiseetsok. These were, for the most part, occupied only in doing mischief. Some old women, however, who took up the profession, pretended to cure swollen legs by extracting bundles of hair and pieces of leather from them. This was done by suction, and, of course, their mouths were previously filled with the materials extracted. Much more information on these subjects may be obtained from Crantz's "History of Greenland," of which work a translation into English appeared in 1767.

There can be no doubt that many of the wonders of Greenland Magic consist in ventriloquism; and Captain Lyon gives a similar account of an Esquimaux wizard, which is very curious:—"Among our Igloolik acquaintances, were two females, and a few male wizards, of whom the principal was Toolemak.

This personage was cunning and intelligent, and whether, professionally or from his skill in the chase, was considered by all the tribe as a man of importance. As I invariably paid great deference to his opinion on all subjects connected with his calling, he freely communicated to me his superior knowledge, and did not scruple to allow of my being present at his interviews with Tornga,[1] or his patron spirit. In consequence of this, I took an early opportunity of requesting my friend to exhibit his skill in my cabin. His old wife was with him, and, by much flattery and an accidental display of a glittering knife and some beads, she assisted me in obtaining my request. All light excluded, our sorcerer began chaunting to his wife with great vehemence; and she, in return, answered by singing the 'Amna Agat,' which was not discontinued during the whole ceremony. As far as I could hear, he afterwards began turning himself rapidly round, and in a loud powerful voice, vociferated for Tornga with great impatience, at the same time blowing and snorting like a walrus. His noise, impatience, and agitation increased every moment, and he at length seated himself on the deck, varying his tones, and making a rustling noise with his clothes. Suddenly, the voice seemed smothered, and was so managed as to sound as if retreating beneath the deck, each moment becoming more distant, and, ultimately, giving the idea of being many feet below the cabin, when it ceased entirely. His wife now, in

[1] Captain Lyon seems to have considered Tornga as a proper name. It is, however, merely the general term for a familiar spirit; the circumstance of the language having no article perhaps misled him.

answer to my queries, informed me, very seriously, that he had dived, and would send up Tornga Accordingly, in about half a-minute, a distant blowing was heard very slowly approaching, and a voice, which differed from that at first heard, was at times mingled with the blowing, until at length both sounds became distinct, and the old woman informed me that now Tornga was come to answer my questions. I, accordingly, asked several questions of the sagacious spirit, to each of which inquiries I received an answer by two loud claps on the deck, which I was given to understand were favourable. A very hollow, yet powerful voice — certainly much different from the tones of Toolemak—now chanted for some time, and a strange jumble of hisses, groans, shouts, and gabblings like a turkey-cock, succeeded in rapid order. The old woman sang with increased energy, and, as I took it for granted that all this was intended to astonish the Kabloona (European), I cried repeatedly that I was very much afraid. This, as I expected, added fuel to the fire, until the poor immortal, exhausted by its own might, asked leave to retire. The voice gradually sunk from our hearing, as at first, and a very indistinct hissing succeeded. In its advance it sounded like the tone produced by the wind on the bass chord of an Eolian-harp. This was soon changed to a rapid hiss, like that of a rocket, and Toolemak, with a yell, announced his return. I had held my breath at the first distant hissing, and twice exhausted myself, yet our conjuror did not once respire, and even his returning and powerful yell was uttered without a previous stop or inspiration of air. Light being admitted, our

wizard was, as might be expected, in a profuse perspiration, and certainly much exhausted by his exertions, which had continued for at least half an hour. We now observed a couple of bunches, each consisting of two stripes of white deer-skin, and a long piece of sinew, attached to the back of his coat. These we had not seen before, and were informed that they had been sewn on by Tornga, while he was below." [1]

When this account is compared with that of the Greenland sorcerers, it seems to set beyond a doubt that ventriloquism is a talent to be acquired. It appears to have formed the sole means of deception to which the angekoks had recourse, and as they had many pupils, some of whom always succeeded in acquiring a knowledge of their profession, it must have been the chief object of their studies. The failure of many only sets the matter in a stronger light; for it must be an art very difficult of acquirement, and if it could not be obtained the individual could not, of course, exercise a profession which mainly depended upon it. Crantz, in his History of Greenland,[2] remarks, "Their procedure with witches is also very short. If a rumour prevails that a certain old woman is a witch, or a man a wizard, which the poor old creatures may thank themselves for, because they made pretences to charms and quackery: when, I say, her name is up, a man need but have his wife or child die, his arrows miss their mark, or his gun miss fire—the angekok, or

[1] Captain Lyon's Private Journal, pp. 358, 361; and Sir David Brewster's Natural Magic, pp. 176—178.

[2] Crantz, book iii. chap. iv. sect. 33.

conjurer, lays all the blame upon such a poor wretch, and if she has no alliance with some man of arms, all the country will join to stone her, or she will be thrown into the sea or hewn to pieces, according as their rage dictates to them—nay, there have been instances that a man has stabbed his own mother or sister in the presence of a houseful of people, and no one hath upbraided him for it. However, if the executed person hath any near relations they endeavour to avenge her death, and thus the tragedy issues in a prolonged series of murders. Sometimes, when such poor wretches find there is no possible escape, they plunge themselves into the more friendly bosom of the ocean to elude the bloodthirsty weapons that would hew them in pieces, and would leave their dismembered carcase a prey to the ravens. The sign of the cross is made by those pagans at the death of any person, that the spirit may not come back and haunt the survivors, but this is probably merely a relic of Christianity which was once introduced among them by the Norwegians.

[1] Crantz, book v. year 7, § 4.

CHAPTER V.

FAIRY MYTHOLOGY.

Our late chapters have been devoted to the consideration of Witchcraft and Sorcery, and our present will be occupied with another branch, Pneumatology. Of these, at once the most beautiful and most important is the fairy mythology. As to the word *fairy*, it has often been derived from the French *fée*, and the Italian *fata;* but without correctness, or even much plausibility. The derivation is evidently from the Persian *peri*, pronounced in English *peerī*, and in Arabic, the word is *pheri;* so that it has but to be reduced to English spelling to be precisely the same. Nor has this derivation the merit of closeness only; the Eastern peri is the same as the Western fairy. They were, we are told by the Mohammedan doctors, celestial spirits, who fell from their pristine glory, and lost somewhat of their native innocence: yet their crime was not heavy enough to weigh them down to hell; but they alighted upon earth, where they retained much of their beauty and benevolence, and were not entirely destitute of a hope one day to regain their former blissful abodes. How exactly this agrees with the English and Irish fairy, we shall see in the course of this investigation. It would be perfectly in accordance with this account, that, knowing the uncertainty of their future condition,

they should object to the introduction of sacred subjects, and that they should be implacable in their vengeance against those who offended them; and yet, not having lost their love of virtue, that they should encourage its cultivation among mortals, and aid with their favour and protection the excellent and the amiable. So far do the Irish fairies agree with the Persian peri; and the Spanish fairy, derived immediately from the Moors, and by them communicated to the Irish, forms the ground-work of the character: but with this character there is mixed, and often amalgamated, that of the Scandinavian duerga, inhabiting holes and caves, working in metals —sportive, indeed, but malicious, mischievous, and intractable. From the imitations of these strange beings in different lands, arose the Pucks, Robin Goodfellows, Phookas, Bogles, Will-o'-the-wisps, &c., with which the superstitions of all nations are filled; and these, together with the peri—sometimes the two characters being grotesquely blended into one, and sometimes kept beautifully distinct,—make up the Irish fairy mythology. The Eastern idea is exhibited more purely, but in a far less beautiful form, in Scotland. There the fairy superstition is a very gloomy one. Inhabiting caves and rocks, destitute of everything that can render existence tolerable, and yet surrounded with a pomp and splendour illusory only to the unfortunate mortal who beholds them, but invisible to themselves, these unhappy beings were supposed to drag on a miserable life, subject to the power of the devil, who every year carried off the tenth part of them to hell.

They recruited their ranks from mortals whom they seduced, by their apparent splendour, to taste their viands, or to join their dances; or from children, whom they stole from the cradle and enlisted in their dismal ranks. Now it is remarkable, that both these modes of making fairies were believed in England, and the latter in Ireland, though in neither country did the frightful *cause* obtain credit. The Scottish *daoine shí*, or men of peace (they were called the Good People in Ireland, and Pixies in England), lived in great apparent pomp, feasting and holding court in their subterranean abodes; yet if any eye, properly disenchanted, saw them, all the beautiful illusion vanished; the splendid halls were changed into bare and damp caverns; the gorgeous feasts and delicate viands into such refuse as by mortals would not be eaten; their own bloom, beauty, and gaiety likewise vanished, and they appeared wrinkled, haggard, and miserable. Men saw sometimes the delightful fiction, but rarely the dreadful reality, till there was no longer any opportunity of retracting, and the unfortunate individual was bound for ever with the gloomy fate of the fairies themselves. Many are the legends told in Scotland of persons thus carried off by these malevolent beings. It was sufficient to taste of the dishes so tempting to the eye, to join in the graceful and voluptuous dance, or to quaff of the enchanted cup; by these actions the power of the fairies extended over their victim, and the person so caught, though at once undeceived with regard to the splendor and beauty around him, remained for ever with his captors.

Yet even here there were, occasionally, services done to mortals by these capricious creatures. Of the French *fée*, and the Italian *fata*, we need not speak; for they were, for the most part, enchantresses, who worked by spell and charm, according to occult science. One will do for a specimen. We will instance the Fata Manto, whose story is told by Ariosto: he says that, like fairies, she was compelled on one day in the year to take the form of a serpent. Now where Ariosto got this information from it may be difficult to say; but though it is very much to be feared that he drew upon his own imagination for English and Scotch kings, nobility, and cities, yet the romantic dragon is everywhere mingled with the fairy mythology, as the mythic dragon is with pagan theogony. However this may be, the fairy in question was, on the day appointed, changed into a serpent, and being in danger of death, was rescued by a young gentleman, to whom she, by changing herself into a little dog, performed good service. The story is too long for repetition; many of our readers will recollect it, as it is likewise related by La Fontaine. The classical reader will see in it only a modification of the old tale of "Cephalus and Procris;" and, in fine, neither this nor any indigenous Italian tales, seem to illustrate the fairy mythology.

There are, however, fairy tales which run through the whole of Europe; such is the tale of "The Two Hunchbacks." We will relate the Spanish version from Mr. W. J. Thoms, and the Irish as it was given by an Irish lady, and which is, if possible, an im-

provement upon Crofton Croker himself. And here we shall see fully the truth as well as beauty of the remarks of Mr. Thoms, that "strongly as all national tales are impressed with the characteristics of the people among whom they flourish, it must be borne in mind that their distinctive qualities will generally be found of an external nature; consisting, not in the peculiar incidents or personages which figure in the legends, but rather in the marked and national spirit by which those personages are animated, and those incidents brought about. In other words, we shall find it is with the legends as with the natives of a country. Upon dissection, the skeletons are like those of other climes, and it is only in the outward coating of those skeletons that the national features and characteristics are preserved." For this reason we purpose, in a few fairy legends which we shall lay before the reader, not to present him only with the skeleton, but, if we quote fewer legends, to give them at greater length;—and first for the Spanish tale, "Pepito y Cirillo."

"There was not in all Spain a merrier fellow, or one who was a greater favourite than Pepito, humpbacked as he was withal, and which peculiarity had served to obtain for him the by-name of *Corcovado*, by which he was always designated by his familiars. Pepito el Corcovado was, in fact, just the man to travel all round the world without finding an enemy: he was of that smooth and oily disposition which enabled him to glide through all vexations as he did through a crowd, with a good-humoured, by-your-leave sort of smile on his countenance, which

compelled the surliest to grant him free passage. Now Pepito was celebrated all round the country for his musical skill, and the exquisite taste with which he used to sing the songs, both of love and chivalry, so prevalent in that country. His skill was so great, that it was commonly said, that it would have satisfied even Lope de Rueda, the founder of the Spanish opera, or that still more important personage, whose name I do not happen to remember, but whose epitaph in the cathedral of Seville informs us that for his musical powers he had been chosen to sound the trumpet at the day of judgment. This skill, it may be supposed, rendered Pepito el Corcovado an indispensable person at all the village merry-makings. Had he been a well-made, handsome fellow, it might have been a question how far these invitations from fair dames would have been sanctioned by the lords of the creation; but as it was, they all said, with one accord, 'Pepito el Corcovado is certainly a marvellous insinuating fellow; but then, thanks to the saints, he is confoundedly ugly. To one of the merry-makings before alluded to had Pepito gone, and was returning, long after sunset, towards his home. Now, whether he had too freely partaken of the good liquor with which his host had plied him, or whatever might be the cause, the effect was, that after a couple of hours' walk he found himself in a part of the Sierra Morena which he did not know—a lonely dell, surrounded by shadowing cork-trees, carpetted with a most luxuriant and mossy turf, and rendered inexpressibly fragrant by myriads of wild flowers, whose party-coloured blossoms sparkled on

every side. 'Santiago!' exclaimed Pepito, 'but this is a pretty business: here am I lost in the Sierra, which I have traversed, man and boy, these thirty years. Well, it might have been worse; so I'll even wait till daybreak gives me light enough to find the right path.' So saying, with philosophic calmness he wrapped his manta round him, and muttering an ave or two, and a short prayer to his patron saint, laid himself at the foot of a cork-tree, and slept soundly. His sleep was, however, of no long duration: he was soon awakened by the joyous clamour of thousands of little elves sporting on the dewy grass, and singing with might and main a fragment of an old and wild air, which Pepito speedily recognized. Pepito gazed with wonder and delight on the fairies; he had often heard of them, but this was the first time he had ever had the good fortune to see them. He was amused beyond measure at the fantastic mazes of the elfin dances, charmed with the sweetness and harmony with which they carolled forth their lay—

'Lunes, y Martes, y Miercoles, tres,'[1]

and marvelled greatly that they did not sing the rest of the tune. 'Humph, my little mates (quoth he), if you do not know the rest of the tune, I'll just give you a hint of it!' and so saying, he swept his fingers tastefully across the strings of his guitar, and sang with one of the sweetest voices ever heard,

'Jueves, y Viernes, y Sabados, seis.'[2]

This hint was not lost upon his fairy auditors. A

[1] *i. e.* Monday, and Tuesday, and Wednesday, three.
[2] *i. e.* Thursday, and Friday, and Saturday, six.

thousand little pipes, maddened with delight at this addition to their former chorus, took up the strain, and for an hour, at least, did hill and valley echo and re-echo with—

'Lunes, y Martes, y Miercoles, tres ;
Jueves, y Viernes, y Sabados, seis ;'

Pepito accompanying the song with his voice and his guitar. At the end of that period the fairies began to think it was high time to thank the musician for his song, and reward him for his skill. They crowded round him, and requested him to ask whatever he wished. Leaning against a cork-tree to consider what he should ask, the pressure upon the hump reminded him of his deformity, so he pointed with his thumb over his right shoulder. This was hint enough: in the course of a few minutes, a thousand tiny hands were laid upon the hump which decked Pepito's shoulders; it was carried off in triumph, and Pepito rose from the ground as straight a man as any in Andalusia. Pepito returned, was with difficulty recognized; was more idolized by the women, though he lost somewhat of the favour of the men. . Now in the next village lived Cirillo, another hunchback, who, in all other matters, was the very reverse of Pepito: envious, hateful, and arrogant, he did not like to ask Pepito of his adventure; but hoping to lose his own hump, he at length encouraged himself, made the requisite inquiries, and set out in search of a loss. Now Cirillo was, perhaps, of all men, the least qualified to propitiate the fairies; with but little harmony in his nature, he had still less in his voice; and when he reached the dell, without waiting for a

proper pause, or considering the prejudices the fairies have against the mention of anything holy, he no sooner heard the wild air and song,

> 'Lunes, y Martes, y Miercoles, tres;
> Jueves, y Viernes, y Sabados, seis,'

than he shouted out 'y Domingo, siete.' This violation of all rule, and all fairy notions of propriety, so incensed the elfin choristers, that, not content with kicks, cuts, thumps, blows, and pinches, they fixed on his back, amidst shouts and derision, the hunch they had removed from Pepito, and thus dismissed him with two hunches, as a warning to future disturbers of fairy harmony."

Even to this day, "y Domingo, siete" is a very common Spanish proverb when anything is done or said *mal-à-propos*. Now, then, for the Irish legend.

"There were two cousins living at the foot of the gloomy Galtee mountains, in the fertile glen of Aherlow. Lusmore was the name of the one, and except that he had a hump, why he was as good a Christian as ourselves entirely, and wasn't ugly by no means, except in respect of the hump; but Jack Madden, his cousin, was ugly and ill-tempered entirely, and hump-backed into the bargain. So one night, when Lusmore was coming home through the fields he lost his way, and lay down under a wide-spreading oak; and the branches of the great oak stretched over him, and the leaves looked as if they were edged with silver, by reason of the moonlight; and the moon shone brightly and sailed through the blue sky, and the light clouds were about her, and she looked like our

[1] And Sunday seven.

Lady in the midst of the seraphim of glory. And it was then that Lusmore crossed himself, and laid down to sleep in the warm night; but he couldn't any how, and so says he to himself, 'Lusmore, be asy now; don't you see it's no use to sleep when there are so many beautiful things to look at?' But at last, while he lay awake, the good people came—the beautiful little ladies and gentlemen—and they said, 'Now we will dance and sing;' but one lady said, 'No, sure we wont dance nor sing while mortal eyes can see us, and mortal ears hear us. Sure there's Lusmore.' 'Och, and is that all? (said another), and what do we care for Lusmore? And beside, he's asleep.' 'Eroo, murther now! (thought Lusmore to himself); sure did ever any one hear the equal of that?' But yet he looked for all the world as if he'd been asleep; and then the fairies began to sing and dance about the great oak, and it's Lusmore that would have rather seen the elegant dancing on such an elegant night, and with the sweet fairy music, than have all Tipperary for himself. So they sung—

'Da Luan, Da Mort,
Da Luan, Da Mort;'[1]

but Lusmore thought to himself, 'Sure I'll make it more and better for them;' so he chimed in just at the right place, and with such a voice, so sweet and so pleasant, 'Augus da Cadine,' and then went on singing with the others,

'Da Luan, Da Mort,
Da Luan, Da Mort,
Augus, Da Cadine.'[2]

[1] Monday and Tuesday.
[2] Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

So when the fairies heard this, they were delighted entirely, and they took off Lusmore's hump, and exclaimed,

" 'Lusmore, Lusmore,
Doubt not nor deplore,
For the hump which you bore
On your back, is no more;
Look down on the floor,
And behold it, Lusmore.'

" And when he heard these words he felt so light and so happy, that he could have jumped over the moon, as the cow did in the romance of 'The Cat and the Fiddle.' And in the morning he found himself without his hump, and dressed in a new suit that the fairies had given him; so he went home mighty happy. But when Jack Madden heard of it, he went up to Lusmore, and began to coax him with his own ugly mouth to put him in the way of losing his hump also. 'Eroo, Lusmore, darling! tell us all about it, then; may be you would,' said he; so Lusmore told him all about it, and Jack Madden went and lay down under the great oak, just like a great lubberly oaf, as he was. So the fairies came singing, as sweet and sweeter than ever, the song as Lusmore had settled it for them; and because Lusmore told Jack Madden, that all he had to do was to make additions and improvements in the tune, Jack determined to do his best. But Jack had no more taste for music than an owl, and didn't know how, you may say, to improve a tune; so he struck up, just without any regard at all at all to propriety, 'Augus da Dardine, Augus da Hena,'[1] thinking, that if one day was good, two were better, and that he should have two suits of clothes.

[1] And Thursday, and Friday.

But it was then that the little people were wroth entirely, and gave him the mother of a beating, and sent him about his business with Lusmore's hump stuck on beside his own, saying,

> "'Jack Madden, Jack Madden,
> Your words came so bad in
> The tune we felt glad in,
> That your life we may sadden;
> Here 's two humps for Jack Madden!"

Thus runs the Irish legend, and it may be observed, that it exists in almost every language in Europe. There is an Italian version — there is a German version; but those which have been already noticed are the principal, and agree the most completely one with another.

Upon these stories the only remark neeessary to make is, that as the Irish tale does not bring in the mention of Sunday, so the fairies were offended only with the want of taste and sense displayed by Jack Madden.

In the Italian version preserved by Redi, he observes that the fairies sawed off the hump with a saw of butter without any pain to the patient—showing, at all events, the perfeetion to which medieal seienee is brought among the "good people." In the same preface which mentions it, there is also given the Italian story of Whittington. A youth sends a he and a she cat as a venture to a foreign country. It so happens that the ship touches at the eapital of a eountry which was overrun with rats and mice, and where cats were unknown. The eaptain disposes of the cats to great advantage, reeeiving for them a large sum of money. On the

return of the ship, the youth is of course rich, and the adventure taking wind, a rich but foolish young man, thinking that if a couple of cats were so paid for, a more valuable offer will meet with a reward almost boundless—he accordingly sends jewels and silks to a large amount; and the king of the city in question, feeling the courtesy of the act, and prizing nothing so much as the useful animals he has received, sends back a couple of kittens, the offspring of his own favourites. This tale is told in many ways. The Italian tale is interesting to the English reader, as bearing a strong resemblance to the favourite story of the thrice Lord Mayor. It is told of an eastern prince that a cabbage was sent him, and he rewarded the donor with a large sum of money. When this was known, another person sent a sum of money, and received in return an offset of the cabbage. A similar tale is told of Louis XI., when Dauphin. During his residence at the Court of Philip the Good, he was accustomed to ride out frequently with the Count of Charelois, afterterwards Charles the Bold. In one of these excursions he stopped at the house of a peasant and partook of some boiled turnips, which he greatly enjoyed, and afterwards frequently visited the cottage to taste them again. After his accession to the throne of France, the peasant had occasion to visit Paris, and, remembering the royal taste, took a large bag of turnips with him. The distance, however, proved greater than the good man had expected, his little stock of money was exhausted, and he was obliged to eat his turnips. The largest, however,

he religiously preserved. When the king heard these circumstances, he ordered the turnip to be placed in his treasury, and a thousand crowns to be given to the peasant. On his return, the peasant told his lord of the king's liberality; and the latter, adopting the reasoning which we have before noticed, *made* occasion to visit Paris, and took with him a valuable horse, which he presented to the king, beautifully caparisoned. The sagacity of Louis soon discovered the motive of the gift on hearing the residence of the giver. Bring me my turnip, said the king. The turnip was brought, and with much form presented to the gentleman, the king assuring him that it had cost a thousand crowns.

CHAPTER VI.

FAIRY MYTHOLOGY.

We have seen the benevolent character of the Irish fairy, alloyed as it is by caprice and mischief—we shall now turn to the English pixie, which we shall find perfectly identical. The story we select is of one John Maddox, a Cornish labourer, who, sleeping under an oak tree, awoke suddenly in the midst of the night, and found himself surrounded with these airy and beautiful beings. In the clear moonlight were their tiny tables spread with such delicacies as might be supposed fitting food for fairies. Troops of them were dancing on the dewy turf, and joining their voices in such sweet harmony as greets not often the ear of man. John Maddox, bumpkin as he was, was enchanted with the sight. He was a Cornish man, and the Cornish people have ever been noted for their acuteness and good taste. He saw amid their dances and gambols that there was a cap thrown continually about, and this cap once coming within his reach, he caught it up, and placed it upon his own head. The pixies immediately crowded round him, and besought him to give it up to them, assuring him that to himself it could be of no use, but to them of the greatest, as whosoever wore it among them would have authority over the rest. "Well," exclaimed John Maddox, "I will try if it will not give a mortal

power over you, and will accordingly keep it." In vain were their prayers and protestations; Maddox was resolute, and they accordingly carried him to fairy-land. Here was he lodged in a superb palace, attended by crowds of pixies, and served continually with the most costly viands and the most delicate wines. Many were the fairy gifts scattered among the villagers in his native place, and though John Maddox was missing, none suspected whence they came.

Sometime before, a young maiden, to whom tradition assigns the name of Elizabeth, and who was the object of John Maddox's idolatry, had disappeared in the same sudden way, and John had ever since worn the willow; but, among the light and beautiful forms who surrounded the mortal fairy king, he thought he discerned one that he had seen in happier hours than those of his sovereignty. Love has quick eyes: he singled her out from the throng, and soon identified the pixie beauty with his own long-lost Elizabeth. She had been carried away by the fairies, and enrolled in their own ranks. Maddox now put to the test his power: he demanded her restoration to her former condition, but his subjects seemed willing to try conclusions with him, for while they expressed their obedience in all other matters, this they declared was against the fundamental laws of their realm. They would bring him to her situation, but not her to his. Maddox was, however, obstinate; and, finding the pixies equally so, he was for the present obliged to content himself with elevating Elizabeth above all the rest, and putting upon the undutiful fairies tasks like those of Egyptian task-

masters. First, he set them to build a wall round fairy-land; but they did but call the stones together, and the wall was made; and when John Maddox arose in the morning his dominion was surrounded by solid masonry. Grinning with derision, they called him to see the work; and, in his rage, he commanded them to flog one another with all the strength of which they were masters. They obeyed, grinning and laughing all the while, though they were certainly laying on with main and might. At last, finding he was not making himself a popular sovereign, and was, besides, none the nearer to the object of his desire, he gave over the attempt, and resigned himself, in moody endurance, to his solitary throne.

Walking alone, one day, thinking of his hopeless love, among the rocks of his new kingdom, he struck, in a fit of desperate passion, one of the cliffs with an iron mace. The rock split, and from the middle, out crawled a toad. Maddox was delighted; he knew that the sight of this reptile threw the pixies into inconceivable agonies, and that there was not a toad to be found throughout their dwelling-place. This had, no doubt, been imbedded for ages in the rock. He took the toad, summoned all his subjects, and then produced it in their presence. The effect was electrical; they threw themselves before him, offered him all the hidden treasures of the earth, and entreated him to spare them. It was now John's turn to be obstinate: he stuck to his first demand, gave up his crown, and with his now restored Elizabeth, became once more a denizen of this lower earth. He obtained information as to where he

might establish a productive mine, and became a rich and happy man. It was thirty years that he and his betrothed had lived among the pixies, but this time had no effect upon them, and they revisited the earth as youthful in appearance and constitution as when they left it.

There are in Cornwall appearances on the grass—and not in Cornwall only—of rings on the grass, said to be electrical phenomena. These the Cornish call pixie rings, and say they are made by the circling dance of the fairies.

There is one character in the fairy mythology of England, consecrated by the genius of Shakspeare and of Milton; one who figures away in the "Midsummer Night's Dream" with great effect—to wit, Puck. We mention him because he is common to all nations: he is the Rubezahl or Number Nip of Germany; the Cluricaune of Ireland; the Eulenspiegel of Holland; the Howleglass or Owlspeigle of Scotland. It seems, also, both from etymology and character, the same as the Irish Phooka, though the latter spirit seems more uniformly and darkly malicious than the frolicsome goblin of merry England. In Wales he is called Pwcca: and there are many places, both in England and Wales, named after him—namely, for example, Puck Pool, Puckaster Core, Puckleridge, Pucklechurch; in Wales, Pwcca Cwm, &c. Milton gives us a graphic picture of our ancestors' belief in these matters, when, speaking of their evening's amusements, he beautifully says:—

"Till the live-long daylight fail,
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,

With stories told of many a feat,
How fairy Mab the junkets ate.
She was pinched and pulled, she said,
And he by friar's lanthorn led.
Tell how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set;
How in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail had thrashed the corn
That ten day-labourers could not end;
Then lays him down the lubber fiend,
And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
But crop full out of doors he flings,
When the first cock his matin rings."

We find, also, Puck, or Robin Goodfellow, speaking for himself, in Shakspeare, and saying,

"Thou speakest aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal,
And sometimes lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab;
And, when she drinks, against her lips I bob,
And on her withered dew-lap pour the ale.
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometimes for three-foot stool mistaketh me."

These, in fact, were the kind of pranks perpetually ascribed to this whimsical, but amusing, creation of poets' fancy. The Rubezahl of Germany we have already noticed as the Puck of England; we shall now proceed to show the eastern origin of many of the stories of this personage. We are told of Rubezahl how he met with a poor woman herbalizing, and being by her asked where she could meet with certain plants, of which she was in search, he told her that the best thing she could do would be to throw away the herbs she had already collected, and fill her basket with leaves from the tree before her, since he told her they would better answer her purpose. After much

time spent in debating the matter, Rubezahl, who was in the shape of a peasant, took, by force, the basket, flung out the herbs which it already contained, and filled it with the leaves of the tree in question. Very discontentedly did the poor woman go her way, but finding by the wayside some valuable herbs, she threw away the leaves, filled her basket with herbs, and returned home. On taking out the contents, she was surprised to see something glittering at the bottom of the basket, and, on further examination, she found that those leaves which stuck in the wicker were become ducats. It is scarcely possible to say whether her joy at having thus unexpectedly found more than the produce of many weeks' labour was equalled by her sorrow at having thrown away so large a treasure. She went back to the spot, but the tree was not to be found, or the leaves she had cast away.

The prototype of this story may be found in the "Arabian Nights," where we find a certain old man going regularly to a butcher's shop, and paying always in new coin, so beautiful that the butcher always kept it apart, and for some time forbore to touch it. At last, one day, when he went to his hoard, to make some payments, he found no money, but only a collection of green leaves, cut round.

The fairies, mentioned by Wieland, in his enchanting poem, "Oberon," put us in mind of mentioning that Oberon was the general name given to the king, Titania to the queen of the fairies; and there is there a wonderful horn told of, at the sound of which all who were within hearing were compelled to dance. In Ireland, there was a similar tale told of a wonderful

tune, and it is beautifully related under that very title, by Crofton Croker, in his Legends of the south of Ireland. The work of Wieland is one of the most delightful of modern days. In it the fairies are represented much as we have represented them in the previous part of this investigation, and as Shakspeare has shown them to us in those magical dramas, the "Midsummer Night's Dream" and the "Tempest." Prospero is but a John Maddox of a higher order, and Ariel might figure away in the pages of Crofton Croker and of Wieland, without the slightest inconsistency.

In Spencer, on the other hand, we find that, with the metre and style of the Italian poets, he has also taken their ideas of fairy mythology. Hence is it that, instead of the light and sportive pixie, dancing by the clear ocean when the moon is bright on its rippling surface, floating about over its broad expanse in the pearly bark of the Nautilus, decking their beautiful forms with sea-weeds and flowers, with gems from the vast caverns of the deep, and bright shells from the rocks — instead of seeing them, tiny, and living under the open sky, spreading their tables on the top of the mushroom, and dancing beneath the outspread canopy of some aged oak, we hear of fairies dwelling in enchanted castles, having courts of knights and ladies around them, ruling over their own extensive kingdoms, and, in fact, acting as mortal beings suddenly endowed with immortality. This is also the way in which Ariosto speaks of them, to refer you to the tale of Logistella, and that of Manto. We have noticed the general name given to the queen of

the fairies, that of Titania; we must not forget that she was sometimes called Mab, and that Shakspeare thus speaks of her:—

"Oh! then I see Queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the Fancy's midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate stone
On the forefinger of an alderman,
Drawn by a team of little atomies
Across men's noses as they lie asleep.
Her waggon spokes made of long spinners' legs;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
The traces, of the smallest spider's web;
The collars, of the moonshine's watery beams;
Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash of film;
Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid;
Her chariot is an empty hazle nut,
Made by the joiner Squirrel, or old Grub,
Time out of mind the fairies' coachmakers;
And in this state she gallops, night by night,
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
On courtiers' knees, who dream on court'sies straight;
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees;
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream;
Sometimes she driveth o'er a courtier's nose,
And then he dreams of smelling out a suit;
And sometimes comes she with a tithe pig's tail,
Tickling the parson as he lies asleep,
Then dreams he of another benefice;
Sometimes she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then he dreams of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscados—Spanish blades,
Of health, five fathoms deep, and then, anon,
Drums in his ears, at which he starts and wakes,
And being thus frighted, swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again."

Hackneyed as this passage is, it is yet so much to the purpose that the quotation cannot be helped. We have seen in a former part of this work how a certain woman made a wisp of straw take the form of a horse, and what followed. We traced that legend to the Talmud; we shall now show the same tale, as

related of Rubezahl, the Puck of Germany. Hear the words of Bushing:—

"Once on a time, Rubezahl made, of what materials no one knew, a number of pigs, and, disguised as a peasant, took them to market to sell. He sold them, and cautioned the purchaser not to drive them through any water. Now what followed? Why, these same swine, having got sadly covered with mire, what must the peasant do but drive them to the river, which they had no sooner entered than they became wisps of straw, and were carried away by the stream. The peasant was obliged to put up with the loss, for he neither knew what was become of the pigs, nor who was the man from whom he purchased them."

That these traditions should be so brought from the East, we cannot wonder. The manner in which the Talmud became corrupted, has already been touched on, and we shall now again briefly refer to the Spanish origin of some Irish traditions. The dominions of the Moors in Spain were so entirely civilized by that intellectual and interesting people—so fully saturated with the poetry, as well as the religion, of Islamism, that we naturally expect to find many relics among their Christian successors. The Peri mythology was in a far purer state in Spain than in any other western land, and the intercourse that subsisted between Spain and Ireland, at a very early period, satisfactorily accounts for the identity of many legends, of both nations, with those still extant in the East. The literature of Spain changed very much during the wars with the Moors, and after the

expulsion of that people. The romance of Spain was a ballad, almost exclusively dedicated to the praise of some champion of the Cross and St. James. Heroes, instead of vanquishing devils, took to vanquishing Moors; and, in lieu of assistance from fairies, they obtained aid from Santiago. Of these ballads there soon existed so overwhelming a number that all the earlier tales were nearly forgotten; and afterwards, the imitation of Italian works, which introduced a really good model of composition, turned the attention of the people away from the Moorish antiquities of literature. Thus, for want of sufficient taste or sufficient energy, the traditions which the Moors implanted in Spain were, in many cases, lost, and in nearly all overlooked.

In Scotland the Fairy mythology was mingled with the romance of the old Pictish history, and the places assigned to the "good people" were frequently pointed out as having been residences of the chiefs of the Pechs.

Castles remarkable for size, strength, and antiquity, are by the peasantry of Scotland commonly attributed to the Pechs or Picts, who are not supposed to have trusted solely to their skill in architecture in constructing these edifices; but are believed to have bathed the foundation-stone with blood, in order to propitiate the spirit of the soil. Similar to this is the Gaelic tradition that, St. Columba is supposed to have been obliged to bury St. Oran alive beneath the foundation of his monastery, in order to propitiate the spirits of the soil, who demolished by night what was built during the day. Yet afterwards, if any

atrocious deed of blood was committed in a castle, its walls were supposed to sink; and common report says that the walls of Hermitage Castle were once ninety feet high, but thirty feet fell down, thirty feet sunk down, and thirty feet are yet remaining above the ground.[1]

The "Brown Man of the Muirs" is a fairy of the most malignant order, the genuine duergar. Walsingham mentions a story of an unfortunate youth whose brains were extracted from his skull during his sleep by this malicious being. Owing to this operation he remained insane many years, till the Virgin Mary courteously restored his brains to their former station.[2]

"In the deserts and moors of Scotland," says Bocce, "grows an herb named heather, very nutritive to beasts, birds, and especially to bees. In the month of June it produces a flower of purple hue as sweet as honey. Of this flower the Picts made a delicious and wholesome liquor. The manner of making it has perished with their extermination as they never showed the craft of making it, except to their own blood." The traditions of Teviotdale say that when the Pictish nation was exterminated it was found that only two persons had survived the slaughter—a father and a son—they were brought before Kenneth, the conqueror, and their life was offered them on condition that the father would discover the method of making the heath-liquor. "Put this young man to death, then," said the hoary warrior. The barbarous terms were complied with, and he was

[1] Leyden's Remains, pp. 50—83. [2] Ibid. p. 74.

required to fulfil his engagement. "Now put me to death," said he too, "you shall never know the secret: your threats might have influenced my son, but they are lost on me." The king condemned the veteran savage to life, and tradition further relates that his life, as the punishment of his crime, was prolonged far beyond the ordinary term of mortal existence. When some ages had passed and the ancient Pict was blind and bedrid, he overheard some young men vaunting of their feats of strength. He desired to feel the wrist of one of them in order to compare the strength of modern men with those of the times which were only talked of as a fable. They reached to him a bar of iron, which he broke between his hands, saying you are not feeble, but you cannot be compared to the men of ancient times.[1] This is the Scottish version of a tale which is found in many lands, and in many shapes. The Danes have a similar story of Holgar Danske, better known by his French name of Ogier. He is said to be laid in a half torpid slumber beneath the vaults of Cronenburg Castle. In this state a robber was once induced by splendid offers to visit him. When he came into the presence of Ogier the hero half-opened his eyes, and desired the intruder on his repose to stretch out his hand. Instead of complying with this dangerous request the robber offered to the grasp of Ogier an iron crow, which he took and crushed between his fingers. Then imagining that he had by squeezing the hand of the stranger sufficiently proved his strength and fortitude, Ogier exclaimed, "It is well there are yet *men* in Denmark."

[1] Leyden's Remains, p. 320.

This tale of Holger Danske forms the connecting link between the tradition of the Pictish hero, and the more gorgeous fables of Arthur, who is supposed yet to be alive, and to inhabit Tintagel Castle, of Frederic Barbarossa, who, according to the legends of Germany, is yet secluded in the castle of Kyffhausen; and of Sebastian, the Portuguese monarch, who was till within very late years considered as a living character, and destined yet to reoccupy the throne of his country.

South Britain, too, was said to be peopled by giants, much in the same way that the world of old was. There was, say the fabulists, a certain King of Greece who had twenty daughters all married to princes and other great men, but, like the daughters of Danaus, they determined to murder their husbands; and, like the daughters of Danaus, there was one more tender-hearted than the rest. She, however, instead of quietly allowing the slaughter to proceed, gave information of the plot, and the princes were saved. Banishment for life was the punishment inflicted upon the nineteen guilty princesses: and they were sent to Britain, then an uninhabited island, which from Albin, the eldest of them, received the name of Albion. Here they remained alone till the devil, taking at various times the shape of nineteen young princes, provided them with heirs to their lonely dominions. These were the giants, who grew and multiplied till they were rooted out by Brute and Corinæus.[1] But to return to places venerated by Scottish tradition.

[1] Chronicle of the Kings of England.

Wineburgh, in Teviotdale, is a green hill of considerable height, regarded by the peasants as a resort of the fairies, the sound of whose revels is said to be often heard by the peasant, while he is unable to see them. On the top is a small, deep, and black lake, believed by the peasants to be bottomless, to disturb the waters of which, by throwing stones into it, is reckoned offensive to the spirits of the mountains. Tradition relates that, about the middle of last century, a stone having been inadvertently cast into it by a shepherd, a deluge of water burst suddenly from the hill, swelled the rivulet Sletrig, and inundated the town of Hawick. However fabulous be this assigned cause of the inundation, the fact of the inundation itself is ascertained, and was probably the consequence of the bursting of a waterspout on the hill of Wineburgh. Lakes and pits on the tops of mountains are regarded in the Border with a degree of superstitious horror, as the porches or entrances of the subterraneous habitations of the fairies, from which confused murmurs, the cries of children, moaning voices, the ringing of bells, and the sounds of musical instruments, are often supposed to be heard. Round these hills the green fairy circles are believed to wind in a spiral direction till they reach the descent to the central cavern, so that if the unwary traveller be benighted on the charmed ground he is inevitably conducted by an invisible power to the fearful descent.[1]

Tradition still records with many circumstances of horror the ravages of the pestilence in Scotland.

[1] Leyden's Remains, p. 316.

Gold, according to some accounts, seems to have had a sort of specific attraction for the matter of infection, and it is frequently represented as concentrating its virulence in a pot of gold. According to others it seems to have been regarded as a kind of spirit, or monster, which, like the cockatrice, it was deadly to look upon, and it was sometimes termed "*the bad yellow.*" Sometimes it was buried under large, flat stones, and in some places the peasantry still point out such stones, under which they suppose it to be buried, and which they are anxious not to raise, lest it should emerge and again contaminate the atmosphere. The Bass of Inverury, an earthen mound about two hundred feet high, is said by tradition to have once been a castle which was walled and covered up with earth, because the inhabitants were infected with the plague. It stands on the banks of the Ury, against which stream it is defended by buttresses built by the inhabitants of Inverury, who were alarmed by a prophecy ascribed to Thomas the Rhymer, and preserved by tradition:

"Dee and Don they shall run on,
And Tweed shall run and Tay;
And the bonny water of Ury
Shall bear the Bass away."

The inhabitants concluding that this could not be without releasing the pestilence, raised ramparts against the encroachments of the stream.[1]

Among places supposed in Scotland to be haunted either by fairies or other spiritual beings, must not be forgotten the Rocking-stones, commonly reckoned a

[1] Leyden's Remains, p. 342.

Druidical monument, which has been always held in superstitious veneration by the people: the popular opinion, which supposes them to be inhabited by a spirit, coincides with that of the ancient Icelanders, who worshipped the demons which they supposed to inhabit great stones. It is related in the Kristni Saga (chap. 2), that the first Icelandic bishop, by chanting a hymn over one of these sacred stones immediately after his arrival in the island, split it, expelled the spirit, and converted its worshippers to Christianity. The herb vervain, also revered by the Druids, was reckoned a powerful charm by the common people; and there is still preserved a popular rhyme, supposed to be addressed to a young woman by a fiend, who wished to seduce her, in the form of a handsome young man:—

> "Gin ye wish to be leman mine
> Lay off the St. John's wort and the vervine."

By his repugnance to these sacred plants his mistress discovered the cloven foot.[1]

The adder-stone, too, was a relic of Druidical superstition, and the vulgar still suppose all perforated stones to be bored by the stings of adders. The rowan-tree, or mountain-ash, is yet supposed to avert the power of sorcery; and an inferior degree of the same virtue is ascribed to the bay and the holly.[2]

An "earth-fast" stone, or an insulated stone enclosed in a bed of earth, was supposed by the Scotch to possess peculiar properties. It is frequently applied to sprains and bruises, and used to dissipate

[1] Leyden's Remains, p. 80. [2] Ib. p. 76.

swellings, but its blow is reckoned uncommonly severe.[1]

The phenomena of Nature were pressed into the same service. Leyden, in the Notes to the "Scenes of Infancy," remarks that it was a popular opinion among the Scottish peasantry that the Northern-lights, or Aurora Borealis, generally termed by them "Streamers," first appeared before the rebellion in 1715, and that they only appear during seasons of trouble and excitement, portending wars more or less sanguinary in proportion to the intensity of their red colour. A poet of the Middle Ages thus expresses the same opinion:—

> "Sæpe malum hoc nobis cœlestia signa canebant,
> Cum totiens ignitæ acies ceu luce pavendæ
> Per medias noctis dirum fulsere tenebras,
> Partibus et variis micuerunt igne sinistro.
> Quod monstrum scimus bellum ferale secutum
> Quo se Christicolæ ferro petiere nefando
> Et consanguineus rupit pia fœdera mucro."[2]

Hearne relates that the northern and southern Indian tribes of the Chippewas suppose the Northern-lights to be occasioned by the frisking of deer in the fields above, and by the dancing and merriment of their deceased friends.

The corph-canwyll, or corpse-candle, is a Scottish as well as a Welsh superstition. Leyden has beautifully alluded to it in his "Ode to Phantasy:"—

> "And then the dead man's lamp I spy,
> As twinkling blue it passes by,
> Soon followed by the sable pall
> And pomp of shadowy funeral."

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[1] See Leyden's "Cout of Keeldar."

[2] Florus Diaconus Lugdunensis, ap. Mabillonii Analecta Vetera, vol. i. p. 392.

We shall now quit the subject of fairies, and bestow a little attention upon a branch of superstition, which, though not exactly identical, is still more nearly connected with it than with any other. There are a great number of curious stories, originally derived from the Talmud, found among the Greeks, and afterwards much altered and transplanted into the various modern languages.

An instance of similarity between Greek and Gaelic fable is the following. When Ulysses had put out the eye of Polyphemus with a stake, the latter very naturally made as much noise, being an uneducated person, as he conveniently could. He had previously inquired the name of Ulysses, and had received for answer Ουτις (Nobody). "Oh!" exclaims the monster, "this vile Nobody has put my eye out." "Well," exclaimed his companions, "if nobody has hurt you, what on earth do you make such a noise for?" Now the Gaelic story is this. A certain miller was much annoyed by a goblin, who used to come and set his mill at work at night when there was no grain to be ground, greatly to the danger of the machinery, so he desired a person to watch. This person, however, always fell asleep, but once woke up from a nap time enough to see the mill in full operation, a blazing fire, and the goblin himself, a huge hairy being, sitting by the side thereof. "What is your name?" or rather, "Fat is her name?" said the Highlander. "Ourisk" (Goblin), said the unwelcome guest; "and what is yours?" "Myself," was the reply; "her nain sell." The goblin now went quietly to sleep himself, and the Highlander taking a shovel of hot

coals, flung them into the hairy lap of the goblin, who was instantly in a blaze. Out ran the monster to his companions, making as much noise as Polyphemus. "Well," said they, "who set you on fire?" "Myself," said the unlucky monster. "Well, then, you must put it out yourself," was the consoling rejoinder.

Nor, when we speak of the semi-deities of ancient Greece, must we forget the Sirens, and the change which the belief in their existence underwent. The Sirens of the Heroic Ages gave place to the still more fairy-like Mermaid of romantic times. They at times sought the company of mortals, and considering themselves a superior race, expressed great indignation when their advances were slighted. Waldron gives many such accounts as prevailing in the Isle of Man, and the most interesting of them are collected by Leyden in the preface to his ballad entitled "The Mermaid."

On one occasion a very beautiful mermaid fell in love with a young shepherd, and expressed her attachment by bringing him pearls, gems, and other precious marine productions. Casting her arms one day eagerly around him, he feared she intended to drag him into the sea, and after struggling a little, broke loose from her embraces and ran away. So highly was the mermaid displeased, either with his suspicion or her own disappointment, that she cast a pebble at him and flung herself into the sea, from which she never returned. The shepherd, though not struck hard enough by the pebble to cause a bruise, fell sick immediately,

and, after languishing seven days in great agony, expired.

Another legend of the same island states, that a mermaid being taken in a net was kept three days on shore; but finding that she would neither eat, drink, sleep, nor speak, though they well knew that she possessed the power of language, they became afraid of the vengeance of her marine companions, and afforded her the means of escape. She eagerly embraced it, and glided with incredible swiftness to the sea-side. Those who had had her in custody watched her departure. They found that she was welcomed on her arrival at the sea-coast by a great number of her own species, who asked her what she had seen remarkable among the inhabitants of the earth. "Nothing," she replied, "except that they are silly enough to throw away the water in which they have boiled their eggs."

Another instance of revenge on the part of these beings for slighting their proffered love is noticed by Collins. He says that a mermaid, angry with a young man on this account, excited by her incantations a mist, which long concealed the island of Mona from navigators. But a far more beautiful tale, save that it too much resembles Sancho Panza's account of the heavenly goats, is preserved by Waldron concerning the first diving-bell. The adventurous person who descended brought up the following modest and extremely probable account of his submarine adventures. "After," said he, "I had passed the region of fishes, I descended into a pure element, clear as the air in the serenest and most unclouded day, through

which as I passed I saw the bottom of the watery world, paved with coral and a shining kind of pebbles, which glittered like the sunbeams reflected in a glass. I longed to tread the delightful paths, and never felt more exquisite delight than when the machine I was enclosed in grazed upon it. On looking through the little windows of my prison, I saw large streets and squares on every side, ornamented with huge pyramids of crystal not inferior in brightness to the finest diamonds, and the most beautiful building, not of stone, nor of brick, but of mother-of-pearl, and embossed in various figures with shells of all colours. The passage which led to one of these magnificent apartments being open, I endeavoured with my whole strength to move my inclosure towards it, which I did, though with great difficulty, and very slowly. At last, however, I got entrance into a very spacious room, in the midst of which stood a large amber table, with several chairs round it of the same. The floor of it was composed of rough diamonds, topazes, emeralds, rubies, and pearls. Here I doubted not but to make my voyage as profitable as it was pleasant, for could I have brought with me but a few of these, they would have been of more value than all we could hope for in a thousand wrecks, but they were so strongly wedged in and so firmly cemented by time that they were not to be unfastened. I saw several chains, carcanets, and rings, of all manner of precious stones, finely cut, and set after our manner, which I suppose had been the prize of the winds and waves; these were hanging loosely on the jasper walls by strings made of rushes,

which I might easily have taken down, but as I had edged myself within half a foot reach of them, I was unfortunately drawn back through your want of line.[1] In my return I saw several comely mermen and beautiful mermaids, the inhabitants of this blissful region, swiftly descending towards it, but they seemed frighted at my appearance, and glided at a distance from me, taking me, no doubt, for some monstrous and new created species."

At times the mermaid laid aside her scaly train and appeared as a lovely woman with sea-green hair. It was thus that she exhibited herself to the chosen objects of her love, and a legend of exquisite beauty is given by Mr. Crofton Croker in his "Fairy Legends," of a marriage between an Irish fisherman and a "merrow," as the mermaid is called in that country.

Dr. Webster in his "Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft,"[2] has collected many curious accounts of mermaids and mermen; he speaks of one which in India had been raised to the episcopal dignity, and actually wore the mitre, but so dissatisfied was he with his condition on dry land, that when an opportunity was given him he made his escape to the sea, and courteously bowing to those who stood on the shore, he plunged beneath the waves. "But this," he remarks, "being a story told to Bartholinus by a Jesuit, had better be left to the judgment of the wise and prudent." Some of these submarine beings were, it seems, greatly to be dreaded by young women who happened to walk alone by the sea-coast, for they did

[1] He had drawn out already 480,000 miles of rope!
[2] Pages 285—287.

not scruple to take with them the same liberties in which the sea-and river-gods of the Greeks indulged themselves. Stowe also says,[1] "In the year 1187, being the thirty-third year of the reign of King Henry II., near unto Oreford, in Suffolk, certain fishers of the sea took in their nets a fish having the shape of a man in all points, which fish was kept by Bartholomew de Glanville, custos of the castle of Oreford, in the same castle, for the space of six months and more, for a wonder—he spake not a word. All manner of meats he did gladly eat, but most greedily raw fish, after he had crushed out all the moisture. Oftentimes he was brought to the church, where he showed no tokens of adoration. At length, when he was not well looked to, he stole away to the sea, and never afterwards appeared."

As matters of Natural History these beings are noticed by Pliny:[2] he says that during the reign of Tiberius an embassy was sent to him from Ulyssifron purposely to mention that there had been discovered in a cave a "certain sea goblin, called Triton, sounding a shell like a trumpet or cornet," and that his shape was that commonly attributed to Tritons; he states, too, that such a being was seen near Cadiz, and he would sometimes board ships at night, but that whatever part he stood on sunk deeper in the water than the rest, and if he remained long he would sink the ship altogether. Another mermaid was both seen and heard on the same coast where the Triton was observed. The inhabitants heard it moaning very bitterly, as it was dying. After these in-

[1] Annals, p. 157. [2] Nat. Hist. book ix. chap. 5.

stances he tells of sea-elephants, of monsters with teeth nine inches in breadth, and assures us that the very beast, before which Andromeda was exposed, had been caught, and its bones publicly exhibited at Rome by M. Scaurus.

Another derivation from Greek legend we shall take, because it affords us an opportunity of introducing to the reader a legend of Tartary. Orpheus and Eurydice, the Greek fable to which we refer, will need no repetition; nor will it be necessary to do more than merely refer the reader to the tale in the "Arabian Nights," of the two sisters who envied the third, and to the history of Bahman, Perviz, and Parizade, the children of that third. These three, it will be remembered, went to fetch the golden water, the singing tree, and the talking bird, and the two princes were changed into statues of stone for having looked back.

Now for the Tartarian tale. It is among the relations of Sidi Kur, and is called "the stealing of the heart." "Many years ago," says Sidi, "there ruled over a certain kingdom a khan, named Gugulukski, and upon the death of this khan, his son, who was of great reputation and worth, was elected khan in his place. And the new khan married a wife out of the eastern country, but he loved her not. At the distance of one berren from the residence of the khan, dwelt a man who had a daughter of wonderful abilities, and extraordinary beauty. The son of the khan was enamoured of this maiden, and took her to himself; and at length he fell sick of a grievous malady, and died, and this lady knew it not. And

one night, just as the moon was rising, this maiden heard a knocking at the door, and the face of the maiden was gladdened when she beheld the khan, and she went to meet him, and placed cakes and arrack before him. 'Wife,' said the khan, 'follow me.' So she followed; and they kept going further and further, until they arrived at the dwelling of the khan, from which proceeded the sound of cymbals and kettle drums. 'Khan, what is this?' and the khan replied, 'Do you not know that they are now celebrating the feast of my funeral?' Thus spake he, and the lady replied, 'The feast of thy funeral! has anything, then, befallen the khan?' So said he, 'He is departed, but thou shalt bear a son unto him, and when the time is come go into the stable of the elephants, and let him be born there. In the palace there will arise a contention between my mother and my wife, because of the wonderful stone of the kingdom. The wonderful stone lies under the table of sacrifice; give it unto my wife, and send her back to her parents; but do you and my mother reign over the kingdom until my son comes of age.' Thus spake he, and vanished into air, but his beloved fell from very anguish into a swoon. 'Khan! khan!' exclaimed she, sorrowfully, when she came to herself again; and because she saw that the time was come, she went into the stable of the elephants, and her son was born. But in the morning, when the keeper of the elephants came into the stable, and saw the lady with the infant, he said, 'What! has a child been born among the elephants; and surely this may be an injury to the elephants!' But the lady said,

'Go tell the khan's mother, that something wonderful has taken place.' When these words were told to the mother of the khan, then she arose and went into the stable. and the lady related to her all that had happened. 'Wonderful!' said the mother of the khan; 'otherwise he had left no successors; let us go into the house.' So the lady was nursed and tended carefully; and because her account of the wonderful stone was found correct, all the rest of her story was believed. So the khan's wife received the wonderful stone and went home to her parents; and the lady and the khan's mother ruled over the kingdom. Henceforth, too, it happened that on the night of every full moon the khan appeared to his second wife, and remained with her until morning, and then vanished into air. And when she told this to the khan's mother, she did not believe it, but said, if he came he would show himself unto her. So on the next night of the full moon the lady said, 'It is well that thou comest thus, but wilt thou not come every night?' So the khan, when he saw the tears in her eyes, said, 'If thou hast courage, thou mayest do what might bring me every night; but thou art young, and canst not do it.' Then spake the lady, 'If thou wilt but come ever unto me, I will do everything required of me, though I lose both flesh and bone.' Thereupon the khan spake as follows: 'Go, on the night of the full moon, one berren from hence, to the iron old man, and give unto him arrack; a little further you will come unto two rams, to them you must offer batshimak cakes; a little further you will find a host of armed men, there you must share

out meat and cakes. From thence you must proceed to a large block building, stained with blood; the skin of a man floats over it instead of a flag—two aerliks (fiends) stand at the entrance, present unto them both offerings of blood; within the mansion thou wilt discern nine fearful exorcists, and nine hearts upon a throne: "'Take me, take me,'" will the eight old hearts exclaim; and the ninth heart will exclaim, "'Do not take me:'" but leave thou the old hearts, and take the fresh one, and run home with it without looking round.'" Much as the lady was alarmed at the task which she had been enjoined to perform, she set out on the next night of the full moon, divided the offerings, and entered the house. 'Take me not,' exclaimed the fresh heart; but the lady seized the heart and fled. The exorcists fled after her, and cried to those who were watching, 'Stop the thief of the heart!' but the two aerliks said, 'No, we have received of blood.' Then each of the armed men said, 'Stop the thief of the heart!' for they stopped her not themselves; but the rams said, 'No, we have received batshimak cakes.' Then called the rams to the iron old man, 'Stop the thief of the heart!' but the iron old man said, 'No, I have received arrack from her.' So the lady journeyed on without more fear until she reached home, and found, upon entering the house, the khan arrayed in bridal garments; and the khan drew nigh and threw his arms around the neck of the lady."

We owe this tale to that profound and elegant scholar, W. J. Thoms, and cannot forbear quoting his beautiful remark upon it. "This tale," says he,

"is worthy of notice, from the proofs which it affords that the depth of womanly affection, and the patient endurance of suffering to which women will submit for the sake of the objects of that affection, are the same in the wild regions of Tartary as in the most civilized portions of the globe. The appearance of the khan after his death to his second wife whom he loved, and the courageous attempts of that beloved wife to rescue the heart of her husband from the exorcists, form a pretty specimen of a Tartarian love-tale, worked into a romance by the horrors to which the faithful wife is exposed." To these remarks we will add one or two more. It seems that there is more than a chance resemblance, in the large block building, to the Nastrond of the Scandinavians: and as to the appeasing with offerings those who would have impeded the way, we find the same thing in the history of Ahmed and Pari-Banou, as related in the "Arabian Nights." When Ahmed went to fetch the water from the fountain of lions, he threw a quarter of a sheep to each of those ferocious animals, and while they were devouring their repast he escaped with his prize. The same is again to be found in the sop thrown to Cerberus. It seems a proceeding natural enough, but is not often mentioned in romance.

And here will be the place to notice a few other spiritual, or semi-spiritual, beings, sometimes the cause of much alarm, because believed to be revengeful and mischievous. The Minotaur is repeated in the Dragon of Saint George, and the Worm of Lambton.

"In the park of Lambton, the residence of the Earls of Durham, and of the family for centuries, is the shell of a little oratory, near the new bridge, on the left of the road immediately within the entrance of the park, and to this building is attached the following legend, doubtless, the concoction of the monks of old:—

"The heir of Lambton fishing, as was his profane custom, in the Wear on a Sunday, hooked a small worm or eft, which he carelessly threw into a well, and thought no more of the adventure. The worm, at first neglected, grew until it was too large for its first habitation, and issuing forth from 'the worm well,' betook itself to the Wear, where it usually lay a part of the day coiled round a crag in the middle of the water. It also frequented a green mound near the well ('the worm hill'), where it lapped itself nine times round, leaving vermicular traces, of which grave living witnesses depose that they have seen the vestiges. It now became the terror of the country, and amongst other enormities, levied a daily contribution of nine cows' milk, which was always placed for it at the green hill, and in default of which it devoured man and beast. Young Lambton had, it seems, meanwhile wholly repented of his former life and conversations, had bathed himself in a bath of holy water, taken the sign of the cross, and joined the Crusaders. On his return home, he was exceedingly shocked at the effects of his youthful imprudence, and immediately undertook the adventure to destroy the worm, in which he succeeded."

There is also a tradition connected with the loch

of Alemoor, from whence the river Ale flows into the Teviot, near Ancram; that it is the residence of the "water cow," a huge monster of an amphibious character, and not unlike the Siberian mammoth. On this account the lake itself is regarded with superstitious horror by the neighbouring peasantry.

The Russian superstitions are by no means destitute of interest, and the following examples will furnish proofs of their similarity to many which we have already noticed.

The Koschtschie, or the Deathless, is a horrid monster, with a death's head and fleshless skeleton, through which one sees the black blood flowing and the yellow heart beating: he is avaricious, thirsty for gold, a hater alike of old age and extreme youth, and is an unceasing enemy to the fortunate. Notwithstanding his extreme ugliness, he is a great admirer of young girls and women. He lives in the heights of the Kaskel, and in the hollows of the Caucasus, where, deep in the bowels of the earth, he conceals his countless treasures, for all riches, consisting of gold, silver, or precious stones, are his alone. His weapon is an iron club, with which he strikes down all the earth-born who cross his path. It is supposed by some that he typifies death to the people, though there are tales concerning him, in which he is overcome and killed by superior powers.

The Russalkhan, or elves and nymphs, form a strong contrast to this form of horror, and, in some respects, remind us of the Persian Peris. They are said to be very beautiful: those who once gaze upon them have afterwards neither eye nor feeling for

human loveliness; those who have once heard the enchantments of their magic songs, have henceforth neither heart nor ear for sounds which move the breasts of ordinary men. Woe be to him who at certain seasons wanders through the forests, and has not strength to be deaf and senseless to their bewitching voice! if once his step falters, if once his eye turns aside, he is lost, utterly lost. In the moment that he is rapt in contemplation, they change into hideous forms with lame and stunted limbs, and the astonished wanderer is crippled with them at the same instant, and is never more master of his limbs.

The Russians believe, likewise, that wandering lights, our will-o'-the-wisp, are the souls of still-born children. They desire not to lure the traveller astray in moors and marshes, but the restless little beings, belonging neither to heaven nor earth, may not rest till they have found their bodies.

Their notions of the Deluge, and the future destruction of the world, are in this fashion:—Four great whales support the earth. Ages since, one of the whales died, and caused thereby a fearful disturbance in the earth, and a flood of all the waters and seas, so that the highest mountain-tops were covered. The same will happen again when another whale dies; and when all are gone, the earth will fall to pieces and disappear, and the end of all things will be at that time.[1]

There are yet several subjects connected with spiritual essences which require some notice. Of

[1] Muller's Russia and the Russians.

these, one is that of presentiments. We are told of many persons who have had presentiments of their own deaths, or those of other persons; but as it is always, save in cases of inspiration, in consequence of experience of the past, and by analogy, that any one judges of the future, so if a person finds himself attacked by a mortal disease, though at the time he appear in good health, it cannot be surprising that he should feel and speak of his dissolution as a matter likely soon to come to pass, and this may be without imposture or enthusiasm. A good judge of character may often foretell the future greatness of an individual yet obscure; but this is nothing supernatural. A few instances of predictions or presentiments will serve by way of example. "This coarse, unpromising man (said Lord Falkland, pointing to Cromwell) will be the greatest man in the kingdom, if the nation comes to blows." An almanac-maker in Spain predicted, in clear and precise terms, the death of Henry IV., King of France; and Pieresc, though he had no faith whatever in the vain science of astrology, yet, alarmed at whatever menaced the life of a beloved sovereign, consulted with some of the king's friends, and had the Spanish almanac laid before him: he courteously thanked them for their solicitude, but utterly slighted the prediction. The event occurred, and the next year the friar spread his fame by a new almanac. Now we have reason to believe that this prediction was the result, either of his being concerned in the plot, or being the tool of those who were; for it appears that the king's assassination

was talked of both in Spain and Sicily before it took place.

Another instance, is that of the celebrated Cardan. Among the many predictions of this remarkable man, was one concerning his own death; and he is said, upon no mean authority,[1] when the time drew nigh, to have abstained from food, lest, by the failure of his prediction, his reputation should suffer. Taking into consideration the excitable temperament and vivid imagination of Cardan, we may safely acquit him of having committed suicide to preserve his reputation; he is far more likely to have fallen a victim to his own convictions, or, at least, to have refrained from taking nourishment only from a strong impression that it was useless to struggle with destiny. He died.

The great success of his calculations brought Astrology into greater vogue than ever;[2] and his skill as a physician was thought not a little enhanced by his astral researches. He is said[3] to have been sent for by Cardinal Beatoun, Archbishop of St. Andrew's, to prescribe for a disease which had baffled the skill of the most eminent physicians of the country. The disorder yielded to the treatment of Cardan, who, on taking leave of the primate, observed, "I have been able to cure you of your sick-

[1] "Cum tribus diebus minus septuagesimum quintum annum implevisset eodem quo predixerat anno et die, videlicet XI. kalend. Octobris, defecit ob id, ne falleret, mortem suâ inediâ accelerasse creditus."—THUANUS, lib. lxii. p. 155.

[2] "Judiciaria quam vocant fidem apud multos adstruxit dum certiora per eam quam ex-parte possint plerumque promere."—Ibid.

[3] Lavrey's Hist. of England, vol. i. p. 711; Melvile's Memoirs, p. 14.

ness but cannot change your destiny, nor prevent you from being hanged!" An ominous farewell, but which was literally fulfilled eighteen years after. The Archbishop was hanged by order of the Commissioners sent by Mary, the Queen Regent. Cardan is not the only Astrologer of whom it has been said that he destroyed himself to verify his own prediction; the same accusation has been made against Martin Hortensius, of whom Descartes remarks, that he not only predicted the time of his own death, but that of two of his pupils, and that the result corresponded with the prophecy. It is but fair to add, that Descartes seems to have placed very little reliance on the story, and to have ridiculed both the science and the abilities of Hortensius.[1]

We have another example of a remarkable presentiment in the case of Cardinal de Retz, whose revolutionary disposition was detected, even in his youth, by the sagacity of Mazarine. De Retz had written a history of the conspiracy of Fiesco with such vehement admiration of his hero, that the cardinal predicted that De Retz would be one of the most turbulent spirits of the age; and this prophecy was amply fulfilled.

Two curious predictions are preserved in Ellis's Polynesian Researches.[2] "A certain prophet had declared that a canoe, without an outrigger, should one day arrive among them, bringing strangers from beyond the sea; they regarded this as an utter

[1] Lettres au Père Mersenne, Letter xxxv. vol. ii.; see also Taylor's Notes to Ocellus Lucanus, p. 62. Hortensius was professor of Mathematics at Amsterdam.

[2] Vol. ii. p. 53.

impossibility, because their own canoes will not live without one. But when they saw the boats which European ships brought out, they declared that the prediction was at last accomplished, and that outriggerless canoes had, according to the prophecy of Maui, appeared. But he also declared that after that they should also behold canoes moving along over the sea, not only without outriggers, but also without sails or cordage, and if, as Mr. Ellis remarks, a steam-vessel were to make its appearance, they would then consider the second prediction of Maui accomplished."

There is a sort of supernatural revelation which occasionally finds credit in Scotland called second sight, so called because the person thus gifted sees, or imagines he sees, things done at a distance at the time they really occur. It is said to be hereditary in certain families. Dr. Ferriars, in his theory of apparitions, gives us a few remarkable stories about this power—Deuteroscopia, as it has been somewhat pedantically called by classifiers. "A gentleman (says he) connected with my family, an officer in the army, and addicted to no superstition, was quartered, early in life, near the castle of a gentleman in the north of Scotland, who was supposed to possess the second sight. Strange rumours were afloat respecting the old chieftain. He had spoken to an apparition which ran along the walls of his house, and had never since been cheerful. His prophetic visions surprised even the regions of credulity, and his retired habits favored the popular opinions. My friend (continues the doctor) assured me, that one day, while he was read-

ing to the ladies of the family, the chief, who had been walking across the room, stopped suddenly and assumed the look of a seer; he rang the bell, and ordered the groom to saddle a horse, to proceed immediately to a seat in the neighbourhood and inquire after the health of a lady, whom he named; if the account was favorable he was to go on to another castle, and inquire about another lady. The reader instantly closed his book, and with many entreaties urged the chief to explain the abrupt orders he had just given, adding, that he was convinced they were the result of the second sight. The chief was at first very unwilling to explain, but at last he said, that the door had appeared to open, and a lady without a head to enter; that this indicated the death of one of his acquaintance, and that the only persons it resembled were the ladies he had named. After a few hours the servant returned, bearing the news that one of the ladies died by an apoplectic stroke at the very time the seer declared. At another time the old gentleman expressed great anxiety respecting some of his people who were out at sea in the fishing boat belonging to the castle; at length he exclaimed, 'My boat is lost.' 'How do you know that?' asked the colonel. He was answered, 'I see two of the boatmen bringing in the third drowned, all dripping wet, and laying him beside your chair.' The chair was shifted with great precipitation, and in the course of the night the fishermen returned with the body of one of the boatmen who had been drowned." It is impossible at this distance of time and place, and with such a paucity of circumstance, to explain these

stories; but, unless we were able to investigate them, we ought not to consider them miraculous. The usefulness of the gift does not appear; and it is to be lamented that such tales should be told in a book like that of Dr. Ferriars, without a careful collation of *all* the circumstances of the case.

One of the most remarkable agents in imposture has been that extraordinary faculty called ventriloquism. The reader is, doubtless, aware that some persons have the power of causing their voice to appear to proceed from any place they please—from the ceiling of a room, from the floor or a corner, from another person or an inanimate substance, and this can be done without the ventriloquist opening his lips or seeming to speak at all. With this faculty there is commonly connected a great capacity of imitating sounds of all kinds. The manner in which this extraordinary power is exercised has been the subject of much and acute philosophical investigation, and has, we believe, been satisfactorily explained: and as we have seen in our account of Greenland witchcraft, there appears reason to believe that it can be acquired; but, however this may be, the thing itself is rare, and its effects truly astounding. Those who witnessed the wonderful performances of the late Mr. Mathews must have been struck with the uncommon correctness of his imitations. This truly original man, as remarkable for humour and wit as for talent, was decidedly the first ventriloquist of the day; and, before we adduce any instances of more ancient professors, let us relate an anecdote of this remarkable man. He was once at the house

of a friend in the country, with whom he was about to dine, and, bent on frolic, he ran downstairs into the kitchen, under pretence of washing his hands; here he saw the cook scraping a salmon, which suddenly, and to her ineffable amazement, cried out, in a mournful tone, "Oh, don't,—you hurt me." She threw the fish down, and for some moments regarded it in silence; then again gathering courage, she seized upon the salmon and the knife, and recommenced operations; but the fish was no better pleased than before—indeed, he seemed rather incensed that no regard was paid to his remonstrances, and this time exclaimed, very sharply, "What! are you at it again? Didn't I tell you it hurt me?" Down went salmon, knife, and all, and upstairs flew the terrified cook, burst into her master's presence, and declared that an evil spirit had got into the salmon, and that she would not stop in the house another moment. So great was her fright, that Mr. Mathews was obliged to exculpate both the fiend and the salmon. But the cook was by no means at ease, as to the safety of her own soul or her master's, while Mr. Mathews was in the house; "for," said she, "if the devil was not in the salmon, where could he be?"

In the fourteenth century, a woman who possessed this power gave herself out for a prophet in Italy. She caused the voice to issue from the pit of the stomach, and was consulted even by princes. She gave to each what answer she thought would prove most pleasing: but, at last, some of her prophecies failing, a book was written to prove her an impostor,

or rather a witch, and that she had a devil within her; upon which supposition this deceitful but unfortunate woman was burnt alive.

But the most amusing compound of wit and knavery ever transacted by this medium, is that related of Louis Brabant, who, becoming enamoured of the daughter of a rich banker at Paris, whose name was Cornuto, formed a design (notwithstanding the known avarice of the father, and his equally noted anxiety to form a rich alliance for his daughter) to get from him both the lady and the fortune. He got introduced to the banker, who had amassed his wealth by means more efficacious than praiseworthy, and soon found out that he was very superstitious. One day, having talked a long while about ghosts, the voice of Cornuto's father (whom Brabant knew) was heard from the ceiling, declaring that his soul was suffering the most horrible tortures in purgatory, but would be released if Cornuto would put forty thousand francs into the hands of Brabant to redeem out of the hands the Algerines one hundred Christian captives. Cornuto distrusted the young man, though he saw he did not speak, and appointed to meet the ghost the next day in a field, where there could, as he thought, be no opportunity of deception. The ghost consented, but on condition that Brabant should be present, without which he declared that he would not speak to Cornuto. Accordingly they went together into a field, where the same voice came from the ground, and raised the sum required to one hundred thousand francs, for which, though sorely frighted, Cornuto gave his bond. Soon after, the ghost persuaded him

to give his daughter in marriage to Brabant, and to leave, by will, all his immense property to him. It was not long before he found what a scoundrel was his son-in-law, and how he had been cheated. The old man died of vexation, and Brabant inherited the property.

CHAPTER VII.

OF TALISMANS AND CHARMS.

It cannot have escaped the notice of the reader, that, in treating on Magic, considered as a natural science, we were perpetually stumbling on doings which involved necromancy or witchcraft. We resume, therefore, the subject in this book, with an especial reference to that Magic called geotic, and in which the agency of infernal, or at least of superhuman power was required.

The theory, according to which virtue was believed to reside in animal, vegetable, and mineral substances, has already been discussed at large, and also the theory according to which the powers and properties of the planets, and other heavenly bodies, was supposed concentrated in plates of their own peculiar metal, or gems of their several government, by engraving on such plates or gems certain mystical signs of the signs or planets themselves. These plates, or gems so engraved, were called talismans, and by their means was it that most magical operations are reported to have been performed. Roger Bacon[1] had a very high opinion of their power, and at the same time of the great difficulty attending their formation. The difficulty to which he alludes seems to have been threefold, namely, to find out what were the characters of

[1] De Mirab. Pot. Art. et Nat. cap. 2.

the planets or signs; to ascertain what particular character was suited to any specific object; and, to discover the hour in which it should be engraved.

Every work treating on Occult Philosophy gives a great number of strange characters, purporting to be those of the planets, signs, and stars; but Cornelius Agrippa tells how they were known to be so. He remarks[1] that if plants, for instance, known to be under the dominion of any sign or planet, have their roots cut across the sap, vessels will be seen disposed into the form of a particular figure, which figure is the seal or character of the planet. Thus marigold and the bay-tree give those of the sun; but next, as a great number of such characters may be thus obtained—for plants of the same kind by no means present always the same figure—it becomes a question, which of all these is the most powerful, and for what purposes it is to be used? Thus, for instance, there was one seal[2] or character of Jupiter, useful for the prolongation of life; another for advancement in honour; one, of Saturn, to foretell the future; and one to destroy an enemy. The hour in which a talisman was made, was also a matter of great importance, and of some difficulty. An image of Saturn, made under certain planetary aspects, would converse with men; but if Venus[3] cast an aspect on Saturn and Mercury at the time of its formation, then the image would still speak, but would declare things which, to mortal ears, were better left unspoken.

The forms of talismans were varied. The Eastern

[1] Corn. Agrip. Occult. Phil. lib. i. cap. 33.
[2] Ibid. lib. ii. cap. 39. [3] Id.

tales are full of their wonders, and they are spoken of as lamps, rings, jewels, rods, and of many other sorts. Rings were favourite vehicles of talismanic power. A certain [1] wise prince of the Indians gave Apollonius Tyanæus a set of seven rings, made of the metals under the rule of the seven planets respectively—one of lead, one of gold, one of copper, &c. On the day of each planet, he wore the corresponding ring, and by means of these he lived, without feeling the approaches of old age, for upwards of one hundred and thirty years. Now, these rings were made according to the rules given above. When the planet ascended under a fortunate aspect, a metal, a stone, and an herb, under its government, were chosen; a section of the root of the plant containing the planetary character, was placed under the stone, and the latter, with the root beneath it, set in a ring of the proper metal. On the gem was then engraved the sign or seal observed in the root. He thus might wear, on Saturday, a loadstone ring, set in lead, with a slice of quince-wood under it, and on the other days accordingly. This story is told by Cornelius Agrippa, who also quotes Josephus to prove that such talismanic rings were made by Moses, to cause love and forgetfulness.

The ring of Gyges, too, by which he is said to have become invisible by turning the engraved stone inwards, is another case in point; nor must the signet-ring of Solomon, by which he commanded the spirits, be passed over in silence. This ring had the mystic word "SCHEMHAMPHORASCH" engraven upon it, and,

[1] Corn. Agrip. Occ. Phil. lib. i. cap. 47.

by means of the power which its possession gave him, he built the Temple.

Another ring, said, like the mystic cestus of Venus, to have possessed the property of making the wearer both beloved and fortunate, is ascribed to Battus; and mention [1] is made of rings which, if closed up in an earthen vessel with a blind lizard, will, when the lizard is restored to sight, be efficacious in restoring sight to a blind man,—a fact which no physician even of this incredulous age will deny.

An instance of the efficacy of talismans is related by Delrio.[2] He says that a certain woman, who had the greatest possible respect for her husband's character, and who entertained a strong sense of his continued kindness, was yet, whenever she saw him, seized with so resistless a fury, that she could scarcely be prevented from attacking him with her nails. She much lamented this strange disease, and strove, though in vain, against its influence. They lived, of course, separately, and never saw each other; but it occurred to a physician that if the wife were compelled to spend a short time in her husband's company, she might get over her involuntary aversion. The experiment was tried, but without success. At last, the whole disorder was found to be the effect of a magical talisman, which being removed, the parties lived happily together. He relates this tale from Codronchus, but he had himself sometimes juster notions, and quotes with approbation some public [3] documents, by which a belief

[1] Cornelius Agrip. Oc. Phil. lib. i. cap. 16.
[2] Disquisitiones Magicæ, lib. iv. p. i. Quæst. iv. § 9.
[3] "Imprimis dicere cœlum aut astra sensu vel intelligente anima prædita damnatum olim fuit Constantinopolitano synodo et articulis Pa-

in the power of astrological talismans was condemned. Yet he seems to have believed that though such effects were no longer to be performed by Natural Magic, Sorcery was still permitted as a punishment for sin. The opinion of the learned in his day was gradually changing. They had not yet rejected all the wild tales of Pliny, nor their belief in Astrology and Alchemy: but they seem to have somewhat purified their ideas on astrological matters, and the occult properties of bodies were less and less attributed to planetary influence. That all things were but parts of one stupendous whole, and that every kingdom of Nature had its hidden and inscrutable relations to the others, was still the theory of their philosophy; but the virtues thus inherent in bodies were deemed more fixed and less dependent upon the aspects of the heavenly luminaries. They still believed that a plant or a metal had somewhat of the nature of that star under whose rule it was; but they did not imagine the hour of gathering the one or of fashioning the other had much influence in modifying its effects.

While the opinions of the learned in general were undergoing this change, there was, however, "et alia magices factio,"—there was no inconsiderable number of educated people who still adhered to the old creed, and who maintained the constant change of properties in many bodies as the planets changed their aspects. Delrio and some others took a middle course: they rejected much of the natural magic, and condemned those wonderful theories of Fulginas Forlivius and Corne-

risiensibus, estque erroris et scandali plena opinio propter superstitionem et idololatriam annexam." Lib. i. cap. 3. Disquisitiones Magicæ.

lius Agrippa about the human constitution; they approved[1] the Parisian Articles in as far as astrological talismans were concerned, and yet neutralised all this by admitting every wonder to be possible through necromancy; they accepted such traditions as that the flesh of a peacock will not putrefy, and that the stag has the power of driving out arrows from its body by eating the herb dittany,—they repeated such tales as those of Simon Magus having made a man out of air, that he was able to fly whenever he pleased, and that he had the power of becoming invisible,—they acknowledged the miracles of the Egyptian priests to have been as real, though not as great as those of Moses,—but they contended that all these things were done, not, as older writers asserted, by natural magic, but by the aid of evil spirits. That the air and the earth, the clouds and the waters, were peopled by spiritual essences, invisible to mortal eyes, but capable of acting on all objects and in every variety of manner, was a doctrine by no means denied by those who believed magic to be a natural science: those, however, who referred all the recorded wonders of history and fable to the influence of such spirits, were unconsciously striking a blow, and that a very formidable one, at the root of all magical pretensions whatever.

Where any effect, however wonderful, is attributed

[1] Conclusio sit ex articulo Parisiensi XXI. "Quod imagines vel ex metallo aut cerâ, vel aliæ materiæ ad certas constellationes fabricatæ vel certo charactere aut figurâ efformatæ aut etiam baptizatæ, exorcisatæ, vel consecratæ aut potius execratæ secundum predictas artes et sub certis diebus habeant virtutes mirabiles quæ in libris hujusmodi superstitiosis recelantur, error est in fide et philosophiâ naturali et astronomiâ vera."—Probatur conclusio.—Dis. Mag. lib. i. c. 3.

to a profound knowledge of science, those only are entitled to dispute the cause who are themselves profoundly skilled; but where, as is the case with spiritual intercourse, the *possibility* of the cause may be disputed; where *opinion* has so much authority, there the unlearned as well as the learned may deny, and their right to do so cannot be gainsaid. There is a moral obligation on the human mind to believe that which is demonstrated, and the ascertained principles of science lead sometimes to such extraordinary results, that there is an equal obligation not hastily to deny the most unexpected of propositions. Besides which, all those sciences with which Magic is connected bear reference to the ultimate atoms of bodies; there, like a river that loses itself in the sands, all traces of them are lost,—facts become too minute to be detected by the human senses, and the mind, for want of these facts, can no longer support theories. Magic, therefore, might have maintained its ground much longer than it did, had it not been degraded from a "natural science" to a "black art." Its pretensions would have been difficult to disprove, even when their impracticability was fully acknowledged, and the light of modern science would rather have rendered it invisible by a superior blaze, as the stars are in the sunshine, than have extinguished it at once. But when it was thus put upon a new foundation, another mode of treatment became applicable to it; and as there is no obligation upon man to believe anything supernatural which he does not find expressly declared in Holy Writ, Magic soon began to feel that it was dependent on the mere

opinion of mankind, and its decline accordingly commenced. The fate of Alchemy has proved the truth of these remarks; for, even in the present day, the transmutation of metals is rather laid aside as *impracticable*, than renounced as *impossible*.

But to return—charms as well as talismanic words; and verses spoken, as well as metallic plates engraved, were deemed possessed of no small efficacy. The annals of fable are full of the buildings, which, like Stonehenge, have been raised by "word of power"—the cures which have been effected—the wild beasts and serpents destroyed by magical rhymes, and the other wonders which have been performed—

> "By charm and spell,
> Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell."[1]

We hear of an infant,[2] who hearing some fearful spell muttered, caught the words, and afterwards repeated them, till such tempests and thunderings were produced that a whole village was burned by the lightning. We hear of the "wizards that peep and mutter,"[3] and some of the charms muttered by the ancient enchanters have come down to our day. Dr. Webster argues in favour of the efficacy of charms from the now exploded notion that music cures the bite of the tarantula, and that the tune required is indicated by the colour of the insect—he observes, also, that as the striking of a harp-string will move another in unison with it, "it[4] must needs be granted that words and rhythms fitly joined and composed being pronounced do put the atoms of the air

[1] Lay of the Last Minstrel, canto i.
[2] Webster's Witchcraft, p. 334.
[3] Isaiah viii. 19.
[4] Disc. of Witch. p. 343.

into such a site, motion, figure, and contexture, that may at a distance operate upon the subject for which they are so fitted, and produce such effects as they were framed and intended for especially being framed under powerful and suitable constellations from whence they receive their greatest force."

Webster, all throughout his work, opposes the notion of infernal agency, and supports the more ancient theory of scientific operation. Yet, taking as fact, all the extravagant relations of Greek and Roman writers, he is sometimes, of course, driven to great embarrassment to make good his theory. Nothing seems to have given him greater trouble than the stories told of magic crystals and glasses, globes wherein the "round world and all that is therein," were offered to the gaze of the inquirer, and the events of past times again at his command transacted before his eyes. Concerning these he hardly ventures an opinion, and, like De Haen, who stated that there certainly might in our days be cases of demoniacal possession; but that those persons put under his care on this account by the Emperor Joseph II. were as certainly impostors: so Webster is willing to allow that there might be some truth in the "Ars Beryllistica," but that all the instances brought under his notice were "superstitious delusions, fancies, mistakes, cheats, and impostures."[1] The magic power in this case is supposed to be, or rather was supposed to be, lodged in the crystal, and "it is practised in the dark by the inspection of a boy, or a maid that are virgins," these

[1] Webster, p. 311.

children looking into the glass, beryl, globe, or crystal, are enabled to see anything which they wish;" usually the past alone was exhibited, but according to Paracelsus,[1] the present and the future might also be known by the same means. An account is given of Spengler, by Joachim Camerarius,[2] which seems to Webster the only similar relation worthy of credit. He (Spengler) stated that a person of rank and family, whose name he declined giving, had brought him a gem of a round figure, and of considerable size, and said that many years before he had met in the market-place with a stranger, to whom he gave entertainment for three days, on departing, the stranger, as a token of his gratitude, left with his noble host this gem, telling him that whatever he wished certainly to know would appear to him in that gem, but that his own eyes would see nothing; he must employ a boy not yet arrived at puberty. This promise was, he said, amply performed, and even if he asked any difficult questions an answer would be visible in the crystal to the boy; but that he *grew tired of using it*, and so brought it as a present to Spengler, who, "being a great hater of superstition, did cause it to be broken into small pieces, and so with the silk in which it was wrapped threw it into the sink of the house."

Among the many charms that Reginald Scott has, with so much industry, collected, are some which are to be performed by means of crystals. The mode of using them is the same as that which we have already considered.[3] But, in these cases, the crystal is sup-

[1] Explic. Astron. p. 654. [2] Preface to Plutarch de Def. Orac.
[3] Vol. I. book ii. chap.

posed to be operated upon by supernatural power; whereas, in the other instances, it was contended that there was some natural virtue in the stone—exhibited, indeed, in a mystical way—but yet not requiring for its explanation the supposition of either angelic or demoniacal agency. Scott directs [1] that a crystal (he does not say of what shape) be marked with the sign of the cross with olive-oil, the operator turning to the east; under the cross is to be written the words "Saint Helen:" a child, born in wedlock, and perfectly innocent, is then to take the crystal in his hands, and the operator, kneeling behind him, is to repeat a prayer to St. Helen, that whatsoever he wishes is to become evident in that stone. The result will be, that the saint herself will appear in an angelic form within the crystal, and will answer any questions put to her. This charm, he adds, is to be practised just at sun-rising, and in fine clear weather. He then proceeds to quote the opinion of Cardan, who derides such visions,[2] and attempts to explain the way in which thieves were said to be displayed in a glass to those who had been robbed. A glass vial is to be filled with holy-water, and decorated with crosses: an innocent child is to examine the phial, and, after certain charms are pronounced, he will see angels; at last, the face of the thief will be visible, "even as plainly, I believe," adds Scott in his quaint way, "as the man in the moon;" the thief, all the while suffering great torment. "For, in truth, there are toys, artificially conveyed into glass, which will

[1] Disc. of Witchcraft, book xii. ch. 17.
[2] "De Rerum Varietate," lib. xvi. cap. 93.

make the water bubble, and devices to make images appear in the bubbles; as, also, there be artificial glasses which will show unto you, that shall look thereinto, many images of divers forms, and some so small and curious that they shall, in favor, resemble whomsoever you think upon."

Cardan, it appears, repeatedly tried these charms, and has left it upon record that the whole was delusion. A somewhat more formidable recipe is given by Scott — to enclose a spirit in a crystal, so that it shall appear to any person, and at any time. To do this, much abstinence and many prayers are prescribed, various circles, marked with crosses and defended by holy names, are to be traced on the ground, and the operator having provided himself with five sharp and bright swords, is to write the names of five infernal spirits, each with a different sword. He is then to address a charm to these invisible beings, and he will see five horsemen coming from the north, attended by a "marvellous company." When they come to the charmed circle, they will alight and proffer their services; and if commanded to put a spirit, "learned in all arts and sciences," into the stone, they will obey. The spirits are then to have licence to depart, and the stone will become an oracle.

In like manner, it was esteemed possible to make an arrangement with any person condemned to death, in virtue of which he promised that his soul should be at the command of the contractor during that person's natural life, should appear to him in a crystal stone, and inform him of whatsoever he wished to know, on condition that he, on his part, should

regularly pray for the soul of the deceased, and cause masses to be said for him.

The oaths, bonds, conjurations and licences used or directed to be used, are blasphemous, and sometimes indelicate to the extreme; and Scott does not spare either his ridicule or his censure.

Lane, in his work on the Modern Egyptians, gives some curious information as to the practice of a similar mode of divination among them, and the author of "Eöthen" gives in that work the result of his experience. The two accounts are, however, widely dissimilar, and Mr. Kinglake unquestionably is right in branding as an impostor the magician with whom *he* had to do. It is worthy of notice that the South Sea islanders practised a kind of divination very much resembling that in question.

Besides examining the entrails of victims offered in sacrifice, there were other species of divination performed elsewhere, as the patu, which consisted in dividing a ripe cocoa-nut into two equal parts, taking the half opposite to that to which the stalk was attached, and proceeding with it in a canoe to some distance from the shore; here the priest offered his prayers, and then placing the cocoa-nut in the sea, continued his prayers, and narrowly watching its descent, he thereby pretended to ascertain the result of any measures in which those by whom he was employed were interested. The patu was frequently resorted to while negotiations for peace were carried on between parties who had been engaged in war. Divination was employed to discover the cause or author of sickness, or to ascertain the fate of a fleet or a

canoe that might have commenced a distant or hazardous voyage. This latter was often used in the islands to the westward of the Society group.

The natives had also recourse to several species of divination for discovering the perpetrators of acts of injury, especially theft. Among these was a kind of water ordeal: it resembled in a great degree the waiharru of the Hawaiians. When the parties who had been robbed wished to use this method of discovering the thief, they sent for a priest, who, on being informed of the circumstances connected with the theft, offered prayers to his demon. He now directed a hole to be dug in the floor of the house and filled with water; then taking a young plantain in his hand, he stood over the hole and offered his prayers to the god whom he invoked, and who, if propitious, was supposed to conduct the spirit of the thief to the house and to place it over the water. The image of the spirit which they imagined resembled the person of the man was, according to their account, reflected in the water, and being perceived by the priest, he named the individual or the parties who had committed the theft, stating that the god had shown him the image in the water. The priests were rather careful how they fixed upon an individual, as the accused had but slight prospect of escaping if unable to falsify the charge; but when that could be done, the credit of the god and the influence of the priest were materially diminished. Sometimes the priest, after the first attempt, declared that no answer had been returned, and deferred till the following day the repetition of his enchantments. The report, however,

that this measure had been resorted to generally spread among the people, and the thief, alarmed at the consequences of having the gods engaged against him, usually restored the stolen property under cover of the night, and by this superseded the necessity for any further inquiries.[1]

The case of Lord Prudhoe, now the Duke of Northumberland, and Major Felix, has been given to the public in Blackwood's Magazine for August, 1841. The child then employed described Shakspeare, Voltaire, and the late Archdeacon Wrangham. His description of the last-named was very characteristic. "Lord Prudhoe now named Archdeacon Wrangham, and the Arab boy made answer and said, 'I perceive a tall grey-haired Frank, with a black silk petticoat, walking in a garden with a book in his hand,—he is reading in the book; his eyes are bright and gleaming, his teeth are white; he is the happiest-looking Frank I ever beheld!' Major Felix now named a brother of his, who is in the cavalry of the East India Company, in the presidency of Madras; the magician signed, and the boy again answered, 'I see a red-haired Frank, with a short red jacket and white trousers; he is standing by the sea-shore, and behind him there is a black man in a turban, holding a beautiful horse, richly caparisoned!'—'God in heaven!' cried Major Felix.—'Nay,' the boy resumed, 'this is an old Frank; he has turned round while you are speaking, and by Allah he has but one arm!' Major Felix's brother lost his arm in the campaign of Ava."

[1] Ellis' Polynesian Researches, vol. ii. p. 239, et seq.

Dr. Collyer, in remarking on this instance, and on those of which Mr. Lane was witness, states his opinion that the spectrum thus beheld is not any real spirit or apparition, but merely the "*embodied idea*" of the person requiring the description. He considers this kind of "*mental transfer*" as by no means of uncommon occurrence, and relates an instance in his own experience as illustrating his meaning. He states that at New York, in the year 1841, he mesmerized a Miss ——, and found her condition one of the most exalted. "At the request of her father, who is one of the most eminent artists in the country I brought before her *spiritual* vision the shade of Napoleon, whom she recognized at once; then Byron, and Alexander the Great; the experiment was performed with much care, so that she could not have previously known our intention. I repeated the experiment on a series of persons with a like success. I was obliged to embody the image of those personages in my own mind, before they could be recognized by the recipients; whose brain during the congestive state was so sentient, that the impression was conveyed to the mind, similar to the photographic process of Daguerre.

"I have always," he observes, "advocated the philosophy, that the nervous fluid was governed by the same code of laws which governed heat, light, &c., as radiation and reflection actually made a lady perform the same class of phenomena which is the wonder of travellers in the East. She was desired to look into a cup of molasses (any other dark liquid will answer the same purpose), and when the angle

of incidence from my brain was equal to the angle of reflection from her brain, she distinctly saw the image of my thoughts at the point of coincidence, and gave minute descriptions of many persons whom she could have no idea of; she saw the persons and things in the fluid, only when the angles of thought converged."

This theory of the transmission of thought is noticed and commented on by Mr. Frederick Hockley, in the "Zoist" for October, 1849, and the passage is worth transcribing, as it gives in all probability the latest account of experiments made with crystals for the purpose of divination.

"So far as my own experience extends, I feel convinced that nothing approaching a transmission of thought takes place between the caller and the seer, in fact, the vision in the glass is often quite unconnected with what is passing in the minds of either. In this country the seer generally inspects the crystal for himself, and the object he perceives is known only to himself, and concerns alone his own private affairs. Upon referring to a diary I formerly kept, I find the following entry.

"'♃ *die*, Oct. 9, 1834. This evening I charged my crystal (a glass sphere), and J—— N—— inspected it; she wished to see her mother who lived at Worcester. Upon commencing the call a second time, she perceived a straight streak of light which appeared to open like a pair of compasses, and she then saw the head, and gradually the whole person of her mother, shoulders, waist, &c., but she could not see any feet. She described her mother as dressed in a

green gown with yellow spots, and a purple silk handkerchief with blue spots over her shoulders, her dark hair parted over her forehead. She said her mother appeared to be well.

"'M. inspected the crystal, but had no vision.'

"This J. N. was a young woman, about twenty years of age, and although I knew the purpose for which she inspected, yet having no knowledge of the absent party, it certainly could not be a transmission of my thought. But, says the rationalist, it was the embodiment of her own. Granted—still the following experiment will show even that might not have been the case.

"'⊙ *die*, Nov. 9, 1834. I charged the crystal for E. T. She wished to see a gentleman of her acquaintance (but a perfect stranger to myself), and who then resided a short distance from London. Upon my first charging the glass, she perceived only an eye looking at her; but upon repeating the charge, the whole face and body to the waist formed gradually. So distinctly did the vision appear, that she perceived even a scar he had on his right cheek; he was dressed in black, with *white* neckerchief and *white* shirt studs.

"'I afterwards charged for another person, but they had no vision.'

"In this case the speculatrix had never seen the party in question in any other than a black silk neckerchief and jet studs, but it afterwards appeared that the gentleman, being then in mourning for his deceased wife, he on Sundays wore a white neckcloth and diamond studs, a circumstance she was at

the time perfectly unconscious of, and consequently the vision could not be the embodiment of her own thoughts. I will just add one more relation to prove the fallacy of Dr. C.'s opinion.

"In 1842, an old and worthy friend, of whose strict veracity I have no possible reason to doubt, came from Burnham with a relative to transact some business in London, and during the time of my absence from home with his relation, he took up from sheer curiosity a small oval mounted crystal, which I had been using (without effect) shortly before, and then stood upon the table; and after examining it and trying to guess its use, he observed it to become clouded; this at first he attributed to his breath, but upon further observing it, the cloud, as he expressed it, appeared to open like a pair of ostrich's legs, which gradually resolved itself into the form of a skeleton. He has since told me that at the same time he felt so great an oppression of giddiness and alarm, that he immediately replaced the crystal, and was a considerable time before he could throw off the unpleasant sensations it had produced. It was not until nearly two years after this that he ventured to tell me the circumstance; but I could never by any means induce him to inspect it again. It is remarkable that a few months after this happened his relative, with whom I was absent, *died*.

"In this case there was no embodiment of thought, no angle of incidence equalling the angle of reflexion, and it would be difficult to persuade my friend, a hale and hearty farmer of fifty, that at noon-day he was dreaming."

To this day it is customary in Lancashire to consult "*a seer*" in cases of lost property, and the writer has been informed by persons whose veracity could not be questioned, that they had themselves done so with successful results.

No kind of divination is more ancient. Joseph's cup is, as we have seen, an instance of it. No kind has been more continuous; every age produces its examples. Dr. Dee's crystals are preserved to this day, and he relates in his Diary, published by the Camden Society in 1842:—"16th March, 1575. Her Majestie (Elizabeth) willed me to fetch my glass so famous, and to show unto her some of the properties of it, which I did; her Majestie, being taken down from her horse by the Earle of Leicester, did see some of the properties of that glass, to her Majestie's great contentment and delight." And none is more universal, for we have seen a cognate mode of inquiry into futurity practised even in the Sandwich Islands.

A very scarce work, quoted by Sir Walter Scott, in his notes to Sir Tristrem, relates, among many other wonders done by Virgil, that he constructed a metallic serpent which had the singular property, that when his mouth was open, if any person, in attestation of his innocence or truth, put his hand into the serpent's mouth, the hand could not be withdrawn, unless the assertion made were true. Thus it acted as a kind of ordeal. But, as this serpent was made by the powers of darkness, it helped the truth only as much as it was forced and occasionally by observing rather the letter than

the spirit of an assertion justified the guilty. A certain "knight" of Lombardy suspecting his lady of infidelity, avowed his suspicions. The lady offered to clear herself by placing her hand in the serpent's mouth. The proposal was accepted, and the pair set out for the residence of the "necromancer." On the way the lady contrived to let her paramour know of her situation, amd entreated him to disguise himself and be with her before the serpent. He complied with her request, and the lady putting her hand within the mouth of the brazen reptile, swore that she had no more failed of her duty with the person her husband suspected, or with any other, than with that stranger, pointing out her disguised lover. This being of course true, she withdraws her hand without hurt; but Virgil, who by his necromantic art knew all the circumstances of the case, was so enraged that through the fault of his talisman the guilty party had escaped, that he broke the serpent in pieces. "And then spake Virgilius and sayde that the women be ryght wyse to emmagyn ungracyousnesse, but that in goodnes they be but innocents."[1]

The spirit in which Scott's book was written is that of a thorough contempt for magic and all its ramifications, and a bitter and inextinguishable hatred of Popery. The first is the cause that though a man of much less learning than Webster, and greatly below him both in taste and capacity, he is uniformly consistent and generally satisfactory even in cases where Webster fails. Of the second almost

[1] *i. e.* fools.

every page of his work gives proofs. He rarely misses an opportunity of lashing the "mass-priests" as he terms them, and has introduced a great number of dirty stories, the omission of which would have rendered his book more creditable as well as more credible. No reader of the present day will believe that a priest in Guelderland ever made a woman lie without clothing on the *altar!* while he read mass over her.[1] He sometimes, too, forgets his own divinity, while he attacks that of charms and amulets drawn from popish sources; for instance, finding in a certain [2] conjuration mention made of the golden girdle of our Lord. He adds a note, in these words, "There is no mention made in the Gospels that Christ was worth a golden girdle." It quite escaped his memory that the glorified body of the Lord as seen by St. John in the Isle of Patmos was "girt about the paps with a golden girdle." There are many places in which his zeal leads him considerably beyond the bounds of candor. As if there were not follies enough to be found among the charms really used by papists at that time he includes among what he calls "papistical coseninges" these [3] words found on the canon of the mass, and which he denominates "a charm"—"May this holy mingling of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ be unto me and all receivers thereof health of mind and body and a salutary preparation for the deserving and receiving of life."

[1] Book iv. ch. 6. [2] Book xv. ch. 17.

[3] Book xii. chap. 9. The words are — "Hæc sacrosancta commixtio corporis et sanguinis Domini nostri Jesu Christi fiat mihi omnibusque sumentibus salus mentis et corporis et ad vitam promerendam et capessendam præparatio salutaris."

A very learned account of charms and their operations is given by De Loire in a work now extremely rare; and as it is more interesting than such learning is usually found to be, we shall offer the reader a translation of his concluding chapter, which contains the history of a very remarkable trial concerning sorcery, and repeats the arguments on both sides at some length.

"But before we will shut up this discourse of witchcraft and enchantments, and that which may be said touching the same, I hold it not amiss (and it will be very little from the matter which we have in hand) to set down here in this place the report of a certain accident that came to be in controversy, and was debated and decided in the Court of Parliament of Paris.[1] The question was touching a process made extraordinarily against a young man in a cause wherein he was charged, that by certain scrolls or papers, and such like charms, he attempted the honour and chastity of one whom he loved: whether the same process ought to be admitted and received. The cause was pleaded as a verbal appellation in the Court Criminal by two famous advocates of the palace,[2] and it seemeth that it was upon an appeal first brought from the lodge of Levall. The sum of the process was thus: a certain young man, being exceedingly enamoured of a young gentlewoman, descended of a great house, and desiring to obtain her in marriage, yet see-

[1] The historie of a young man that soght to winne the love of a maide by charmes, and was therefore sued, and condemned by the law.
[2] This cause was pleaded, and the arrest, or judgment, affirmed, by Monsieur Pilcar, on the 16th of April, 1580.

ing his own means and abilities to be so small, as that he found little hope to get the consent of her parents thereunto, and by that means to attain the top of his desire: besides, perceiving that she was solicited by divers persons of great calling and good reputation, he bethought himself of a shorter course as he imagined, and that was to gain the love of the maiden by any means whatsoever. To this effect he continually haunted and frequented the house where she was; and courting her with all kinds of submissive and humble entreaties, and with proffers of all his best services (which he supposed might be most agreeable), and to her contentment, he endeavoured to gain her love and to win her affections. In the end, seeing himself scorned, and in a manner clean out of hope of that which he most desired, he determined to make trial of an extreme remedy; and thereupon going to a certain priest, who was a notorious sorcerer, and did use to give out little scrolls or billets to procure love, besought of him one of these papers, and finding his mistress in a place fit for the purpose, he conveyed the paper into her bosom, whilst himself made semblance that he was but playing and jesting with her. But it happened far otherwise than he imagined, for thinking to gain her love he cast such drugs, or (whether it were) such charms into her bosom, that they brought the maiden near to the point of death.

"Her father and mother being marvellously sad and sorrowful for her sickness, were certified in the end what was the cause thereof; and, therefore, causing an information to be drawn and preferred

against the young man, they got a decree against him to have his body apprehended, the which was executed accordingly. And afterwards the judge gave sentence that the law should proceed peremptorily upon the hearing of the witnesses personally brought against him. From this sentence, as also from the decree touching his apprehension, was the appeal brought, and the pleading thereof was referred to a present hearing. The appellant said that he had been offered great and evident wrong, in that the inferior judge had not only decreed a *capias* against his body, but had also adjudged that the law should proceed upon the evidence of the witnesses personally brought against him. That it was very true, and he did acknowledge that which was laid in the information; and that he did put it into the bosom of the complainant's daughter a little scroll of paper written; but that there was therein neither drugs nor poison, nor any other such thing as might work an alteration in the health of the maiden. That if he had conveyed any poison into it, there was no doubt but he had been worthy of capital punishment, according to the fifth chapter of the Lex Cornelia, 'Si quis venenum necandi hominis causa habuerit.'[1] That the said scroll of paper could not be any poison, for to empoison anybody, neither had it any such force or virtue, but that it was only a writing which he had cast into the bosom of the maid, not thinking any evil or hurt to her. And that, therefore, there was no cause why any such extraordinary process should be made and granted

[1] L. 3, D. ad l. Cornel. de Sicariis.

against him; that it was a thing never heard of in that palace, that an extraordinary criminal accusation should be laid against any man, that, in a foolish wantonness and youthful oversight only, without any will or intent to do evil, had ventured to do that towards a maiden, which in very much did not deserve so much the name of a simple injury.

"For howsoever he did foolishly in casting this paper into the bosom of the maid, yet did he not attempt to wrong her honour or chastity; neither did he pursue or solicit her in any shameless manner; neither did he use any dishonest or unseemly speeches unto her, that might cause her so much as to blush at them: and, in brief, that had not offered her any such foul or bitter injury, for the which he had deserved, by the law, either reproof or any extraordinary punishment.[1] And if it did so happen and fall out by chance afterwards, that the maid became sick, yet it was not consequent that he should be the cause of her sickness. Not without reason was that saying of the Greek poet, Euripides, that all those things which happened casually were very diverse; and that the gods, contrary to human expectation, did take a pleasure to change things here below. There is not any man so sound and healthful, that can assure himself of his health, not so much as a day; and who knoweth what the evening or morning may cause to betide unto him, either prosperous or unfortunate; many things do happen (as the old saying is) between the cup and the lip.

"Yea, but the complainant saith and averreth, that

[1] L. ult. D. de Injuriis.

in the scroll of paper there were certain words charmed, by force whereof their daughter fell sick; certainly their speech is grounded upon a very vain and frail foundation; and the same utterly overthrows and destroys all their accusation. For what man is there so little seen, or so unskilful in the course and causes of Nature, that will believe that charms and enchantments can have any power upon men, and that a figure, a writing, a line, or a word, bred only by the refraction of the air, should work above and beyond Nature, and should have power to alter or change in any sort whatsoever. Every man knoweth sufficiently how that the Cabala of the Jews (which attribute so great force to writings, and to the speaking and pronunciation of certain words) hath been reproved and hissed out of the schools by all learned divines; and that Reuclin, the Almaine, and others, who have allowed and consented to the fond dotages and follies of the Cabalists and Jewish Rabbins, have been censured and condemned by the Masters of Sorbonne; who did hold that all those enchantments, charms, and words, which the Cabala useth, are nothing but mere Magic; and therefore without any efficacy, as coming from the devil who lost all his power at the coming of our Saviour, Christ, into the world, as he himself confessed even by his Oracles, upon inquiry and demand made to them by the Gentiles that lived after Christ. Yea, the Paynims themselves (which were guided and misled by the devil) did ever esteem the art of Magic, and all sorts of charms, to be nothing else but deceits and illusions. And Pliny reciteth how the Emperor Nero, after he

had searched into all the secrets of Magic, and had spared no pains to sound the depths thereof, in the end found that it was but a mere abuse; neither could Tiridates nor Symon Magus perform anything, although they had promised to acquaint him with the full knowledge and science of the same.

"Besides, it cannot anywhere be found, that any person whatsoever was ever accused of being a magician under the good and wise Emperors of Rome: for they knew well that all accusation is to be held and accounted vain where there is no lawful color of trespass committed. And it is most certain that Apuleius (who lived under those good princes, Antoninus Philosophus and Pertinax, being accused before Claudius Maximus, the governor of Africa, that he had allured and gained to his love one Pudentilla, and had so bewitched her, that he had wrought her to marry him) was fully acquitted from that accusation, as being frivolous, vain, and calumnious. On the contrary, those emperors which were held wicked and cruel princes, did find a fair color and pretence by the art Magic, and the Mathematics, to bring such under danger of torment and punishment against whom they bear any malice and hatred, when they were not able to accuse and calumniate them of any other fault or offence. How many noble and honorable Romans, both men and women, did the Emperor Tiberius cause to be put to death, only under color that they had consulted with the Chaldeans. The Emperor Claudius (of whom Ausonius speaketh, that

'Non faciendo nocens sed patiendo fuit;'

that is,

> 'The hurt he did, was not in doing ill,
> But in the patient suffering thereof still)'

did condemn to die (as being a sorcerer) a poor knight of Rome, because he bore about him the egg of a serpent; being persuaded that the same was good to cause his suit in law to go on his side. And Antoninus Caracalla, as saith Spartian,[1] did likewise condemn those that used any ticket or writings tied about their necks, for a remedy against the quartan and tertian. The history is well known of Apollonius Tyaneus, whom Domitian, a wicked prince, did cause to be punished for his Art Magic: albeit those that came and succeeded after him, to wit, Alexander, the son of Mammæa and Aurelius, did honor him during his life, and after his death did consecrate altars and oratories unto him. And, in brief, all the world knoweth how that Valens and Valentinian, for causing so many famous and learned philosophers, and so many noble and worthy senators and Roman knights, to be punished for the pretence of Magic, have been reproved and blamed by many historiographers, — as, namely, Eunapius, Zosimus, Ammianus Marcellinus, and others, who in that regard only have ranged them in the rank and number of evil emperors. And they do marvellously blame those commissaries to whom the trial and inquiry of this crime was committed; if that may and ought to be called a crime, which is rather a vain persuasion or inveterate superstition, bred and engrafted in the hearts of men. And therefore the appellator con-

[1] In vitâ Antonini Caracal.

cluded, that both the decree, the ordinance, and the execution was ill and unjust, and that the judgment ought to be corrected and amended, and the party to be clearly dismissed, absolved, and acquitted.

"On the contrary part, the defendant in the appeal, said and affirmed, that the cause was rightly adjudged by the inferior judge: and that it was well and justly ordered, that extraordinary process should be made and awarded against the appellant: that not only the Lex Cornelia did punish those which should bruise and temper any noisome poisons, to the hurt of another, but those also, 'Qui mala sacrificia fecerant; habuerant,'—which had or made any ill sacrifices. Meaning, undoubtedly, by ill sacrifices the practice of Magic. And this did the Roman emperors interpret more plainly, saying, 'Eorum scientiam esse puniendam et severissimis merito legibus vindicandam qui Magicis accincti artibus aut contra salutem hominum moliti aut pudicos animos ad libidinem deflexisse detegentur.' That their skill and science was worthy to be punished and chastised with severe laws, who by Art Magic should either contrive to impair the health of the people, or should be detected to allure unto lust and lewdness such as were honestly and chastely addicted. Now, as touching the appellant, it appeared by the information brought against him, that he had cast into the bosom of a young maiden a small scroll, not of paper, as he alleged, but of virgin parchment, such as magicians, sorcerers, and enchanters do use, and thereby did think to have attempted her chastity; the proof whereof did plainly appear, in that he had before

solicited her, and sought to have her in marriage. And for that cause, having used sinister and wicked unlawful means, as, namely, by Magic and Witchcraft, to come to his intended purpose, he was worthy to be punished; and process extraordinarily ought to be granted and awarded against him: that the Lex Cornelia did put little or no difference between poison and amorous drinks, and between charms and enchantments: all which in the Greek tongue were called and named by one and the same word, *φαρμακα*, called by Virgil Pharmaceutria; in which eclogue he introduceth a sorceress, who by force, not only of her bird, named *ἴυγξ*,—which, as Langius, the physician, saith, the Almaines do call Windals, or Waseroths, or Rhuerdrommel, and the Latins, Frutilla,—but also by means of herbs, holy words, and other such like charms would draw and allure her love unto her. And, true it is, that Empedocles, having made a book of Sorcery, or Magic, doth show the same much more clearly and manifestly, confounding by this word, *φαρμακα*, wherewith he beginneth his book, both charmed herbs, and enchanted words, and the very skill and art of Sorcery.

"And, as touching those that do use to give either any kind of poison, or any amorous love-drinks, the pains ordained for them by the ancient Roman laws were manifest. For the vile, baser, and meanest sort of persons, as the Civilians speak, 'Debent subjici bestiis—honestiore loco positi capite puniri,—altiore deportari,'[1] ought to be cast to wild beasts to be

[1] L. 3, § legis Corneliæ D. ad legem Cornel. de sica.

devoured; such as are of a more honest and better calling were to beheaded, and those of the best and highest degree were adjudged to be banished. The Persians, as Plutarch reporteth, did cause the heads of such persons to be crushed in pieces between two stones. And, as for Apuleius,[1] he was accused before Claudius Maximus of three things, all comprised under one and the same term of Magic or Sorcery, to wit, that he had given an amorous potion, or love-drink, unto his wife; that he had used both herbs and certain poisons for the working of his enchantments; and, last of all, that he did use certain charms and sacred magical words; and, if he had not had the favor and friendship of Lotharius Avitus, and of Claudius, the friend of Lotharius, it had gone hard with him. But, in the time of Valentinian, the great philosopher Maximus, the disciple of Jamblicus, sped nothing so well; for, being accused of the same crime, he was justly condemned to die, neither could the favor which the Emperor Julian bare him in any sort save and preserve him.

"To make short, the Greeks, and, especially, the Athenians, did so exceedingly hate and abhor this detestable crime, that they would never admit nor frame any form of process against those that were attainted therewithal; but they did presently and immediately cause them to be slain, as appeareth by Lemmia, a sorceress, who (as Demosthenes affirmeth) was put to death for this offence, after she was bewitched and discovered by her chambermaid.[2] The

[1] In vitâ Artaxerxis. [2] Tit. Liv. Decad. iv. li. 10.

Romans, also, did burn all the books of their king, Numa, which did contain certain matter of Magic, as both Titus Livius and Pliny do report. And our civil lawyers do will that all judges, in their judgments concerning the divisions of families (which they call 'Familiæ erciscundæ'), should burn all books discovered to be magical.[1] Wherefore, look how much the authors of such books are to be hated: so much or more, do they grievously adjudge them to be punished, whensoever they find any attainted and convicted, either to have made, or to have used them in any sort whatsoever. Besides, the Virgin Parchment (which the appellant used) is one of the precepts of Magic, which cannot be fitted nor used to any other effect than to an ill end; and this Parchment, is usually made by enchantment of the skin of infants dead-born, and it is intended that the same is done with an express or secret confederation made with the devils: insomuch, as Agrippa, Petrus de Albano, Picatrix, and others the like, detestable and wicked magicians, do no less praise and commend Virgin Parchment,—than the magicians of old times, as Orpheus, did commend the stone called an Agate,[2] which they said was able to do all things that a man would desire.

"To be brief,—to as great effect does the Virgin Parchment serve, as doth the amorous potion or love drink, of which, as the saying is,[3] Lucretius, the poet,

[1] Lib. iv. § 1. D. famil. ercis.
[2] In lib. de Lapidibus.
[3] Juvenal, Sat. vi. 615.

"Cui totam tremuli frontem Cæsonia pulli
Infudit."

died; and Caligula, the emperor, became with such another to be enraged, and, in a sort, distracted and out of his wits; his wife, Cæsonai, having given him such a kind of drink, who, for that cause, was also slain by the soldiers that had before killed her husband, as Josephus[1] reporteth. And more than so, this seemeth to be that Hippomanes, which is apt to stir and procure love, no less than the true Hippomanes plucked from the forehead of a horse-colt, whereof Virgil,[2] Propertius,[3] and other poets do speak much; or that Hippomanes which, as Theocritus reporteth,[4] was planted amongst the Arcadians. Or that fish called Remora, which, as Aristotle saith,[5] was good for love, and for happy success in suits of law. Or the bird called Sippe, spoken of by the same Aristotle;[6] or the lizard, bruised and infused in wine, according as Theocritus prescribeth;[7] or the hair which is found in the end of a wolf's tail; or else the bone of a frog or toad, which hath been cast into a nest of ants, by whom the flesh thereof hath been gnawed away, as Pliny affirmeth.[8]

"Besides all this, in this scroll of Virgin Parchment now in question, there were written certain barbarous and unknown words, which doth sufficiently show that this was a very true magical charm and enchantment. And, whereas it is said that charms

[1] Lib. xix. cap. 3, Antiquitatum.
[2] Lib. iv. Æneid, and iii. Georgic.
[3] Lib. iv. Elegiarum.
[4] In Pharmaceut.
[5] Lib. ii. De Histor. Animal.
[6] Lib. ix. cap. 17, De Historia Animal.
[7] Pharmaceut.
[8] Lib. xviii. cap. 2; and lib. xxxii. cap. 4.

or enchantments have no power or efficacy to work anything, and that, therefore, any accusation which shall be framed or intended against those that use them, is to be held vain and frivolous: what other thing is this, than to reprove all antiquity, and all those ancient lawmakers, and the Roman Decemviri, who did all of them ever acknowledge that there were charms and enchantments? For, in the laws of the twelve tables, it is expressly forbidden. 'Ne quis fruges excantet et alienam segetem pelliciat.'[1] That no man should use any charms or excantations upon the corn and grain of another man. And the learned Pliny, in his 'Natural History,' giveth us a certain experiment of such as drew the fruits of another man out of the owner's ground into another field: for he saith, in the territory of the Marrucines, which is in Abruzzo, a garden of olive-trees belonging to Victius Marcellus, a famous knight of Rome, was carried away and transported whole, even as it stood, to the other side of the highway; and, contrarywise, all the other land which was on the other side of the way, was transported, as it had been in the manner of an exchange, into that very place where the garden stood: so great force was there in charms and enchantments. And, surely, Homer telleth us that Ulysses did staunch the blood that ran down from his leg, being hurt by a wild boar, not by any herbs, but by charms. And this agreeth well with the saying of Pindarus and Sophocles; who affirm that the ancients did think that, by charms, a man might sometimes recover his health. This was the cause

[1] Lib. xvii. cap. 25.

that Theophrastus hath written that those which are troubled with the disease called ischiatica, are healed by charms: and the like saith Varro, of such as are diseased with the gout: and Cato the Censor[1] touching cattle or oxen that have their legs broken or maimed. First, for gouty persons, the manner to cure them he teacheth to be by uttering these words: 'Terra pestem teneto, salus maneto hic in meis pedibus," and repeating the same nine times, and kissing of the earth, and spitting upon it; and that all this must be done fasting. And for curing of oxen or cattle, if you take a reed or green cane, and cut it asunder in the midst, and so bind it on both sides to the hip or truckle-bone of the said cattle or oxen, and singing these words:—

Danat a Daries Astaries—

or otherwise this:—

Haut—Haut Istagis turgis Ardannabon Damnavostra,

he saith it will cure them. And even Constantine the Emperor doth cite a verse in Homer, which being pronounced should hinder and keep a man from being drunken. And the ancient Mythologiques and Orphestalists did attribute such a force to the verses of Orpheus:[2] that they held the pronouncing of them to have as much power as the Jews did imagine to be in their Cabala, which, however superstitious, yet was not without its effects. Now if we should come to the bands of love, caused and procured by charms, we shall find in authors suffi-

[1] Lib. i. de re Rust.
[2] In Geoponicis.

cient store of examples to that effect. And that Virgil[1] reporteth and setteth down the very words which were usually spoken to entangle and to entrap in the snares of love such as are obstinate and untractable. Which words, joined and used with a ceremony of certain knots made in a riband or lace of three several colors, were held to have such power, that they in whose name they were pronounced, should present themselves stricken in love. And to this purpose doth Saint Jerome[2] rehearse the history of a certain young man of Gaza in Syria, who being amorous, and falling in love with a young maiden his neighbour, and not being able to win her to his desire he went to the priests of Esculapius at Memphis, who gave unto him I know not what charms and strange figures written within a plate of copper which he digged and conveyed together with a lace or riband under the grounsel of the house where the maid dwelt. Presently hereupon the devil seized upon her; and she casting away her head-tire from off her head began to call upon the name of the young man, and did desire and endeavour by all means she could that she might be led to the place where he was. But her parents, having a great care of her health and well-doing, led her to the hermit Hilarion, who, notwithstanding she alleged that she was enchanted and bound by charms, yet for all that did perfectly heal her, and in the name of God destroyed all the charms and enchantments of the devil. What shall I

[1] In Eclogis—
"Necte tribus nodis ternos Amarylli colores,
Necte Amarylli nodo et Veneris dic vincula necto,"

[2] In vitâ Hilarionis.

say more? All authors, both ancient and modern, are of one mind, and do accord in this—that charms have the power not only to work and procure love, to alter health and to transport the fruits of the ground from one field or place to another, but to do also things far more marvellous and wonderful than these. The magicians of Pharaoh, by their charms, thought to make themselves equal with Moses the messenger of God. The Ephesians had certain marks and magic words (I know not what) of enchantment by which anything whatsoever they did once attempt and enterprize, did succeed well and answerable to their desire. And such marks or characters (as Eustathius, the interpreter of Homer, writeth) did Crœsus use at such time as he was upon the pile of wood ready to be burned by the command of Cyrus. The Brahmans (as Strabo saith) did not use so much to heal and cure diseases by herbs and simples as they did by charms; and John Lee, the African, writeth, that in high mountains of Morocco there be three apples of gold of an inestimable price and value, the which are so well and surely guarded by enchantments that the Kings of Fez could never get to come near them, albeit they have many and sundry times attempted the same. And that (which doth yet more show the force and power of words) may be seen in Galen, how that a certain enchanter did kill a scorpion by the pronouncing of one only word. And although that Galen as a naturalist did think to solve the matter by saying that the enchanter did first spit before he pronounced anything, and that all the force was in his spittle, and not in his words; yet cannot

he make any man believe, that the spittle, or any excrement of a man, hath so much power as to kill one so readily. Moreover, the conciliator, surnamed Peter de Albano, a physician, tells a great deal more than Galen ever knew—to wit, that he himself saw a cunning enchanter, who, by murmuring certain words in the ear of a bull, did make him fall to the ground suddenly as if he had been dead; and afterwards, with repeating the very same words did cause him to rise again. And this may very well confirm that which is reported of Pythagoras, how, by virtue of his charms, he had the power to make tame and gentle both wolves and other beasts, which by nature were most fierce and cruel. But now, because peradventure the appellant, for fault of better defence, will excuse himself and impute it to the force of love, and will perhaps pleasantly cite certain doctors of our time, who do hold as a common and received opinion, that amorous persons allured and provoked by love are excused from the ordinary punishment of the crimes and offences by them committed.[1]

"And it may be also that they will allege that judgments given by the Areopagites, who (as Aristotle reporteth)[2] did acquit and set free from an accusation a certain woman that was convicted, that in her passion of love she had given an amorous potion to her beloved, of which he died within a short time after; yet thus much I must and will tell of him, that how great and furious soever be the love, yet, for all that, it ought not to excuse any

[1] Piraquellus de pœnis.
[2] Lib. i. Magno. Moralium, c. 17.

person that shall, upon premeditation and advisedly, commit any public crime worthy of exemplary punishment, whatsoever the doctors of later times have said to the contrary; and, notwithstanding that sentence of the Areopagites, the which ought not to be accounted or reckoned of as our own laws;[1] which do punish with like and equal punishment, those that act as Sorcerers, and them that in an amorous passion do attempt the honor and chastity of women, and do temper amorous potions, whereby they cause the sickness or death of any persons.[2] And admit their intentions be not to destroy and kill them, yet so it is, that the law which (as Demosthenes saith)[3] doth correct alike all crimes that are committed, though involuntarily, as well as those that are voluntary: doth likewise punish such persons as much as if they had committed voluntary and wilful murder. Besides, the very arts which they use are prohibited and forbidden, as being of themselves and of their own nature very evil, and are therefore punishable by death and other means, by which they may be restrained. And, to this purpose, we have the ordinance of King Charles II.,[4] recorded in Latin, which willeth that all persons using any such arts as are disallowed, and condemned by the Church and the world universally, should be punished no less than Sorcerers, Diviners, and Enchanters, and the same to be done by such ordinary judges, as to whom the knowledge and determination thereof

1 Lib. iii. Si quis aliquid.
2 Damhouder in tract. simil. juris.
3 Orat. cont. Aristog. l. 2. D. de legibus.
4 This ordinance was in the year 1490.

doth directly appertain. Upon these reasons, the party defendant in this appeal concluded that the cause had been fully, rightly, and in all points well adjudged. And, according to these and the like conclusions, the court gave their judgment, and ordained, that extraordinary process should be made and perfected against the appellant."

BOOK V.

Science.

(Continued.)

CHAPTER I.

ALCHEMY.

One of those shapes which the Atomic Magic took, or one of those branches into which it divaricated, was Alchemy, which, in the end, swallowed up all the rest. The importance of its objects, its rejection in general of supernatural agency, the great learning by which it was supported, and the high rank and character of those who believed in its practicability as a science, set it upon the same footing with Astrology, and caused it to be as extensively pursued. Indeed, in the later ages of these pretended sciences, Astrology seems to have been chiefly cultivated as an adjunct to Alchemy. "Judicial[1] Astrology," says Ashmole, "is the key of Natural Magic, and Natural Magic the door that leads to this blessed stone."

Astrology was, in fact, the foundation of Alchemy. The division of the metals among the planets was soon followed by the idea that the influences of each

[1] Tho. Chem. Brit. p. 443.

planet caused the metal to abound, and that the same matter which, under the rays of Saturn, became lead, under those of Jupiter tin, and of Venus copper, produced silver under certain lunar aspects, and gold when favorably acted upon by the power of the sun. The notions of the ancient philosophers as to the original matter from which the world and all created objects were made, tended much to strengthen opinions of this kind. When Thales had asserted that water was the first of the elements, and that all the visible creation deduced therefrom its origin—it became, in subsequent ages, an excellent mode of illustrating this doctrine to say that the planets, according to their own power and their position in fiery, airy, earthy, and watery signs—so acted upon the fluid mass as to produce that quaternion of elements, which, alone, were for a long time admitted by the philosophers.

> Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth
> Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run,
> Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix
> And nourish all things.—MILTON.

Nor did such a theory at all shock the minds of the most zealous believers in the truth of the Mosaic theory. The Astro-religionists of the day would contend that the influences of the planets were the means by which the Almighty was pleased to bring to a state of order the chaotic mass; and that the mention of trees, plants, &c., before the creation of the sun,[1] moon, and stars, merely signified the endowing the inert chaos with a power of producing vegetables,

[1] Gen. i. 11, 12,

&c., when subjected to the secondary causes of astral radiation.

Van Helmont[1] took up this doctrine of Thales, and attempted to prove its correctness by the following experiment:—He took a vessel of earth, carefully levigated, and which weighed exactly two hundred pounds. In this he planted a willow, which weighed five pounds. After the lapse of five years, he took the willow from the earth, and weighed it: it had increased to one hundred and sixty-four pounds. He weighed also the earth, and found that it had not increased nor decreased in weight. From this he argued, that as he had carefully prevented anything from being put to the earth but water, and as the earth in the vessel had lost nothing of its quantity, that the wood, the sap, and all the materials of which the tree might be found, by analysis, to consist, were all composed of water alone. "Hence," said he, "we need nothing but water to form gold; since, by means of this element, we make a tree, a plant, an animal, even an entire world."

The reasoning used by Van Helmont, must have been unanswerable in his day, for the solution of the phenomenon required a far more advanced state of chemical science than at that time existed.

Springing directly from Astrology, Alchemy partook much of its nature, and though affecting afterwards to depend solely on the discovery of the properties of matter, it must at first have had some tincture of that pneumatology which distinguishes its

[1] Complex. atque mixt. elem. fig. no. 26; also Pluche, Hist. du Ciel. v. ii. p. 119.

mother science. It was, by the activity of the spirits dwelling in the spheres, that veins of their peculiar metals were found in countries under their influence: it was during the hours of their government that those veins of metal grew and increased, and not by the radiated effluvia of the planetary bodies themselves, and during the times of their stay above the horizon. This was the first theory upon which Alchemy was founded; but an investigation of the properties of Nature would familiarise the mind with wonders, and render it no longer necessary to call in the aid of Astrologic demonology. The subsequent cultivation of Astrology and Alchemy jointly, is an anomaly which pointedly shows the false foundation upon which they both stood. This will be more plainly seen in considering the pretensions of Alchemy, or, as it was soon called, Chemistry. These were—

1. The discovery of the philosopher's stone, which would create and multiply gold.

2. The making of an alkahest, or universal solvent, and,

3. The composition of an infallible, universal remedy, called the elixir of life.

The philosopher's stone was supposed to be that by which every kind of matter would be reduced to its most perfect form. It was this, and not any specific power of changing other metals into gold, that gave it its value; it applied to plants and animals, to earths and stones, and even, it was said, to spirits. This perfecting property was exemplified among metals by "transmutation;" because gold was the most perfect of the seven. The notions which pre-

vailed concerning the metals may be seen in Roger Bacon's work, called "Speculum Alchemiæ,"[1] — "Gold is a perfect metal, composed of pure mercury and pure sulphur, and it has no defect. Silver is a body, clean, pure, and *almost* perfect, composed of sulphur and mercury almost pure. This metal is only deficient in fixedness, color, and weight. Tin is a clean but imperfect metal. The sulphur and mercury which compose it are still less pure, and it also needs digestion." The others, lead, copper, and iron, are treated of in like manner, each more impure than the preceding. Generally, however, lead was considered a less pure metal than iron, and iron than copper. Here we find the constituent parts of all metals said to be the same, viz., sulphur and mercury, which, with salt, usurped the places of fire, air, earth, and water, in the systems of many of the philosophers of the middle ages. Those who accepted this doctrine observed that the difference between an impure and an imperfect metal was this, the impure metal had particles of a terreous nature in its composition, and was, besides, compounded of impure mercury, or sulphur, or both. Thus it followed that

[1] "De natura auri—aurum quidem est corpus perfectum ex argento puro, fixo, claro, rubeo et ex sulphure mundo, fixo, rubeo non adurenti generatum et nullum habet defectum. De natura argenti—argentum est corpus mundum purum, fere perfectum, ex argento vivo, puro, fere fixo, claro et albo, et de tali sulphure procreatum et deficit ei pauca fixatio et color cum pondere. De natura stanni—stannum est corpus mundum, imperfectum ex argento vivo, puro, fixo, et non fixo, claro, albo in suo manifesto et rubeo in suo occulto et de tali sulphure procreatum et deficit ei sola decoctio sive digestio. De natura plumbi—plumbum est corpus immundum et imperfectum ex argento vivo, impuro, non fixo, tureo, fæculento aliquantulum albo in manifeste rubeo in occulto et ex tali sulphure adustibili ex aliqua parte procreatum et deficit ei puritas, fixatio, cum colore et ignitione," &c. *Speculum Alch.* c. ii.

an impure metal might be transmuted into a pure one by cleansing it from all terrene particles, leaving only the sulphur and mercury. Lead, for instance, if partly purified, would become copper; if fully purified, tin. On the other hand, an imperfect metal could only be transmuted into a perfect one by changing the mercury and sulphur of which it was composed from an impure into a pure state. The tin thus transmuted from copper and lead successively required a different operation before it could become silver; the extraneous particles had been purged away, but now the principles of which it was composed were to be subjected to a purifying process. Its constituent and essential parts were now to be separated, purified, and reunited; and the search after an agent that would do this was the pursuit of the then most eminent chemists. It was taken for granted that sulphur and mercury were the constituent parts of metals, not because any chemist had ascertained that such was the fact, but because a crowd of writers on Alchemy had proved that it ought to be, and consequently must be so. The great number of errors of this nature with which every science swarmed was the chief cause of the comparatively slow progress of knowledge. Nobody thought it necessary to prove by experiment that which had always been received as an acknowledged truth, and theories were built upon unproved and generally incorrect premises. Modern Chemistry has shown, not that metals are uncompounded bodies, but that all attempts to analyse them have failed. Every additional failure of this kind (and, indeed,

attempts are now no longer made) added to the proofs of impracticability already heaped upon Alchemy; yet, were it ever possible to analyse one metal, to resolve it into oxygen, carbon, or any supposed elements — and it cannot be shown that such a result is impossible,—there would be at once ground for restricting our censures on Alchemy to its acknowledged impracticability. We should have *proof* that, however far its pretensions surpassed human power, they were not absurd. Nothing can be less to the credit of those who hold them than the opinions which are sometimes expressed, about the *absurdity* of those pursuits in which Bacon, and Boerhaave, and Ashmole were engaged. That that which they hoped to attain, or thought capable of being attained, was beyond the reach of human instruments, we now very clearly see; but, from the state in which science then was, it was impossible that *they* could see this, however much we may lament the errors of the first, and the enthusiastic credulity of the last; and regret that powers, and learning, and liberality like theirs should have been led into such a channel. None but the half learned vulgar will cast a sneer upon their arguments, or treat with ridicule the theory which they adopted. Boerhaave discovered himself the error of his opinions, and became a great opponent of Alchemy; but it must not be forgotten that he was once a believer, and his writings bear the tokens of his former philosophical creed; he speaks sometimes of the terrene part of the impure metals, sometimes of the mercurial part of all.

The greater or less degree of perfection in which the philosopher's stone was supposed to exist, determined the matter to which it was to be applied. Ashmole, in the preface to his "Theatrum Chemicum Brittanicum," speaks of the several shapes in which it was to be found; and of some in which, of course, no human being could hope to possess it; he seems, indeed, to have conceived an idea of a principle of perfection capable of being embodied in such a way as to act upon the mineral, the vegetable, the animal, and the spiritual world. "Now,[1] for a particular account of the Hermetic Science, vouchsafe to accept the ensuing collections; yet not so as if therein were contained the works of all our English philosophers. To add anything to the praise thereof, were but to hold a candle before the sun; or should I here deliver a full account of the marvellous operations and effects thereof, it would be as far beyond the limits of a preface, as remote from the belief of the generality of the world. Nor do I expect that all my readers should come with the engagement to believe what I here write, or that there was ever any such thing in *rerum Naturâ* as what we call a philosopher's stone; nor will I persuade them to it (though I must tell them I have not the vanity to publish these sacred, and serious mysteries, and arcana, as romances), 'tis enough, I know, that incredulity has been given to the world as a punishment. Yet I will tell them what one of our ancient poetical philosophers says,—

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[1] Prolegomena, p. 6.

'If you will lysten to my lay,
Something thereby you may finde
That may content your minde,
I wyl not sweare to make you give credence,
For a philosopher wyl finde here in evidence
Of the truth;—and of men that be lay,
I skill not greatly what they saye.'[1]

I must profess I know enough to hold my tongue, but not enough to speak, and the no less real than miraculous fruits I have found in my diligent inquiry into these arcana, lead me on to such degrees of admiration, they command silence, and force me to lose my tongue. He who shall have the happiness to meet with St. Dunstan's work, 'De Occultâ Philosophia,' may therein read such stories as will make him amazed to think what stupendous and immense things are to be performed by virtue of the philosopher's mercury, of which a taste only, and no more; and first of the mineral stone, the which is wrought up to the degree only that hath the power of transmuting any imperfect earthy matter into its utmost degree of perfection; that is, to convert the basest of metals into perfect gold and silver; flints into all manner of precious stones, as rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and diamonds, and many more experiments of the like nature; but as this is but a part, so it is the least share of that blessing which may be acquired by the philosopher's *materia*, if the full virtue thereof were known. Gold, I confess, is a delicious object, a goodly light, which we admire and gaze on, 'ut pueri in Junonis avem;' but as to make gold, saith an incomparable author, is the chiefest intent of the alchemists, so it was

[1] The versified works of English Alchemists.

scarce any intent of the ancient philosophers, and the lowest use the adepti made of the materia. For they being lovers of wisdom more than worldly wealth, aimed at higher and more excellent operations. And certainly he, to whom the whole course of Nature lies open, rejoiceth not so much that he can make gold or silver, or that the devils are become subject to him, as that he sees the heavens open, the angels of God ascending and descending, and that his own name is written in the Book of Life.

Next, to come to the vegetable, magical, and angelical stones, the which have in them no part of the mineral stone, insomuch as that is a stone fermented with metalline and earthy nature; but these are marvellously subtle, and each of them differing in operation and nature, because fitted and fermented for several effects and purposes. Doubtless Adam, with the Fathers before the flood, and since, Abraham, Moses, and Solomon, wrought many wonders by them, yet the utmost of their virtues they never fully understood nor indeed any; but God, the maker of all things in heaven and earth, blessed for evermore! For by the vegetable stone may be perfectly known the nature of man, beasts, fowls, fishes, together with all kinds of trees, plants, and flowers; and how to produce and make them grow, flourish, and bear fruit, how to increase them in color and smell, when and where we please, and this not only at an instant *experimenti gratiâ*, but daily, monthly, yearly, at any time, at any season, yea, even in the depth of winter. Besides,

the masculine part of it, which is wrought up to a solar quality, and through its exceeding heat will burn up and destroy any creature or plant, that, which is lunar and feminine, if immediately applied, will mitigate it with its extreme cold, and in like manner the lunar quality benumbs and congeals any animal, unless it be presently helped and resolved by that of the sun; for though they both are made out of one natural substance, yet in working they have contrary qualities; nevertheless, there is such a natural assistance between them, that what the one cannot do, the other both can and will perform.

Nor are their inward virtues more than their outward beauties, for the solar part is of so resplendent transparent lustre, that the eye of man is scarce able to endure it, and if the lunar part be exposed abroad in a dark night, birds will repair and circulate about it, as flies round a candle, and submit themselves to the captivity of the hand; and this invites me to believe that the stone which the ancient hermit (being then one hundred and forty years old) took out of the wall in his cell and showed Cornelius Gallus, A.D. 1602, was of the nature of this vegetable stone. For, upon the opening his golden box wherein it was enclosed, it dilated its beams all over the room, and that with so great splendour, that it overcame the light that was kindled therein. Besides, the hermit refused to project it upon metal as being unworthy of it, but made his experiments upon Veronica and Rue. By the magical or prospective stone, it is possible to discover

any person in what part of the world soever, although never so seeretly conccaled or hid in chambers, closets, and caverns of the earth. For there it makes a striet inquisition, for, in a word, it fairly presents to your view even the whole world wherein to behold, hear, or see your desire. Nay more, it enables man to understand the language of the ereatures, as the ehirping of birds, and the lowing of beasts, to convey a spirit into an image, whieh, by observing the influence of heavenly bodies, shall become a true oraele. And yet this is not any ways neeromantical or devilish, but easy—wondrous easy, natural, and honest.

"Lastly, as touching the angelical stone it is subtle," saith the aforesaid author, "that it can neither be seen, felt, or weighed, but tasted only. The voiee of man, which bears some proportion to these subtle properties, eomes short in comparison. Nay, the air itself is not so penctrable, and yet, oh mysterious wonder! it is a stone that will lodge in the fire to eternity without being prejudiced. It hath a divine power, eclestial and invisible above the rest, and endows the possessor with heavenly gifts. It affords the apparitions of angels and gives a power of eonversing with them by dreams and revelations, nor dare any evil spirit approach the plaee where it is lodged. Because it is a quintessenee wherein is no eorruptible thing, and where the elements are not corrupt, no devil can stay or abide. St. Dunstan calls it the food of angels, and by others it is termed the heavenly viatieum—the tree of life—and is undoubtedly next under God, the true Alchochodon, or giver of years,

for by it man's body is preserved from corruption, being thereby enabled to live a long time without food. Nay, it is made a question whether a man can die that uses it, which I do not so much admire, as to think why the possessors of it should desire to live that have those manifestations of glory and eternity before their eyes, but desire to be dissolved rather, and to enjoy the full fruition, than live where they must be content with the bare speculation. After Hermes had once attained the knowledge of this stone he gave over the use of all other stones, and therein only delighted. Moses, Solomon, and Hermes were the only three who excelled in the knowledge thereof, and who therewith wrought wonders. That there is a gift of prophecy in the red stone, Racis will tell you, for thereby saith he philosophers have foretold things to come, and Petrus Borus avers that they did prophesy not only generally, but specially, having a foreknowledge of the resurrection, incarnation of Christ, day of judgment, and that the world should be consumed with fire, and this not otherwise than from the insight of their operations. In brief, by the true and various use of the philosophers' *prima materia* (for there are diversities of gifts but the same spirit) the perfection of liberal sciences are made known, the whole wisdom of Nature may be grasped, and notwithstanding what has been said I must further add that there are yet hid greater things than these, for we have seen but few of His works. Howbeit there are but few stocks that are fitted to inoculate the grafts of this science on. They are mysteries incommunicable to any but the adepti, and

those that have been devoted even from their cradles to serve and wait at this altar, and how rarely such have been heard of may appear by Norton—

> 'For few,' saith he, 'or scarcely one,
> In fifteen kingdoms had our red stone.'

And they perhaps were with St. Paul caught up into Paradise, and as he heard unspeakable words, so they wrought unoperable works, such as it is not lawful for man to utter. Of such as these, therefore, will I glory, yet of myself will I not glory save in mine infirmities, and truly whether such were in the body or out of the body I cannot tell (God knoweth) doubtless they were not far from the kingdom of God."

From almost any other man this would have been wrought up into mere rant and blasphemy, yet when we notice the spirit of true piety which breathes through the whole of this amiable man's writings, and the genuine sublimity to which he sometimes attains, we shall be led rather to wish that he had employed his pen upon more sacred subjects than those to which he thus communicates a religious colouring. The long passage which has just been quoted, and for which surely no apology will be thought needful, set forth very strongly in that part which treats of the mineral stone—the ordinary pretensions of alchemy—the other parts point to a system of something like religious allegory, which will be noticed in its proper place. We must now briefly advert to the arguments and experiments upon which the Alchemists relied, when they embarked in pursuit of the philosopher's stone; and we shall in the first

place confine ourselves to the theory of transmutation.

If it be once granted that matter is capable of indefinite degrees of perfection, and that this perfection consists not in its adaptation for its present state, then there is required but little more for alchemy to assume. The metals were, it appears, according to the chemists, as well as the alchemists of the day compound bodies, and it mattered not that they were severally useful and necessary — that iron was in effect more valuable than gold—that their existence in their present condition was absolutely essential for the comforts of society.

An idea had gone abroad that perfection was some positive state, and that with regard to metals gold alone was in that state. The means, however, by which other metals might be purified and rendered as perfect, by which, in fact, they might be transmuted into gold, were considered of far more consequence than the transmutation itself. The fortunate individual who possessed a small portion of the powder of projection might become incalculably rich, but he who had fathomed the mystery of projection itself was admitted within the veil, and had power over the operations of Nature—he had taken a great stride in his intellectual life; he had raised himself many steps in the scale of creation, and henceforth it might be presumed that there was no species of knowledge to which he could not attain. The reasons which placed so high a value on the discoveries of Alchemy were briefly these. To understand the theory of transmutation, so as to be

capable of practising it, required, it was supposed, a knowledge of the mode of operating pursued by Nature herself, the effects of infinitely minute and subtle particles of matter on particles equally subtle and minute, and a power of directing those particles at will. But the eye of man could not behold, nor the instruments of man grasp these almost ultimate atoms without the assistance of a profound philosophy which from its very nature must remain hidden from the multitude. The adepti had been, it was said, in all ages possessed of this power, and lest it should utterly perish, they had handed it down to succeeding ages, in mysterious and enigmatical writings, writings which persevering study might unravel, and which were calculated richly to reward him who might be so fortunate as to come to a right understanding of their contents.

The belief in the three principles—salt, sulphur, and mercury—assumed, afterwards, a new form, and was known as the theory of phlogiston, and of which Stahl and Beecher were the founders. This, which Beecher had invented, but which Stahl had modified and improved, was but another form of that theory which, as exhibited by older chemists, would not have found followers any longer. It declared that all combustible bodies were compounds; that the admixture of what they called phlogiston, with the other constituent parts of the bodies in question, was the cause of their combustibility; and that the metals were each compounded of a peculiar calx and this same phlogiston. Phlogiston was, according to Stahl, an earthy substance, composed of extremely subtle

particles, and very much predisposed to be set in motion with great velocity. But it was observed that the calces of a metal were, in some cases, heavier than the metal itself, and this was to be reconciled with the theory that during the burning of a combustible body, phlogiston was evolved.

Fortunately for Stahl's theory, there was a school of metaphysical chemists at that time, who were too much disposed to reject the inductive mode, and to reason rather from systems than from well-ascertained facts, and, accordingly, they accommodated this intangible, invisible principle to the newly-discovered property of calces, and declared that phlogiston was not only destitute of weight, but actually endowed with a principle of levity, so that whatsoever it combined with, became lighter in consequence. Phlogiston, according to many, was the matter of caloric,[1] and they argued thus:—“ Besides an elementary fire, which chemists conceive to be everywhere uniformly diffused, they are of opinion that fire enters, in different proportions, into the composition of all vegetable and animal, as well as most mineral substances, and in that compacted condensed fixed state, it has been called phlogiston. Of itself, in its natural state of uncombined expansion, fire is not considered capable of shining or burning; but when chemically combined with the other principles of bodies, it is that alone which conceives or continues those motions by which bodies are made to shine, burn, or to consume away. All bodies are more or less susceptible of combustion, according to the quantity of this principle which

[1] See Bishop Watson in his Chemical Essays, vol. iii. p. 167.

enters into their composition, or the degrees of force with which it adheres to them. Notwithstanding all I can say on the subject, I am sensible the reader will still be ready to ask—What is phlogiston? You do not, surely, expect that chemistry should be able to present you with a handful of phlogiston separated from an inflammable body. You may just as reasonably demand a handful of magnetism, gravity, or electricity, to be extracted from a magnetic, weighty, or electric body. There are objects in Nature which cannot otherwise become the objects of sense, than by the effects they produce, and of this kind is phlogiston."

The incompatibility of these remarks with the theory of Stahl, and still more of those circulated under his name after his death, need not to be pointed out. But the dephlogistication of metals was looked upon to be the first step to transmutation, by those who studied Alchemy. The anecdotes of transmutation, which abound in earlier ages, belong rather to the *history* of Alchemy than to the subject under discussion in the present chapter. But there were some operations, some experiments, which took place in the eighteenth century, which for awhile revived the hopes of Hermetic students, and led them to consider "the great secret as almost within their grasp." The names of Geoffroi and Homberg, are deservedly venerated by all lovers of Chemistry; nevertheless, these were the men from whose representations these bright hopes took rise, and the latter was himself a seeker, and, as he himself once thought, no unsuccessful one, of the philosopher's-stone.

About[1] the year 1735, there was established a manufactory, at Paris, the professed object of which was to change iron into copper. As it was indubitable that a quantity of copper was actually sent out of this manufactory, and as it was equally certain that nothing but iron and a certain vitriolic solution was used, the hopes of many were revived, and they trusted that this would but be the first step of a series of transmutations. In a case like this, the old proverb, "ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute," had a double force. If once those mystic agents could be set in action, by whose aid alone it was deemed possible to take the first step in this more than transcendental philosophy, the rest was comparatively easy. The person was put on a different footing, and that which could neither be done nor even understood by others, became to him pleasant and easy. He who began by transmuting iron into copper, would doubtless soon transmute that copper into silver, and the silver into gold.

This was the great object of the vulgar among the learned, and to a great extent among the unlearned also, in their chemical researches. As the actual change in this case was deemed indisputable, a name was given to the copper produced, indicative both of what it was and what it had been, and as the horse of Don Quixote was called Rocin-ante, so the produce of this new and promising manufactory was denominated transmetal. Many persons of property pressed forward to invest capital in a scheme which promised so rich a return. But their hopes and their money

[1] Pluche, Hist. du Ciel, vol. ii. p. 23.

were fated to disappear together, in company with the manager of the works, who left behind him only a small quantity of iron and some blue vitriol, or sulphate of copper. The mystery was now cleared up: the copper contained in the vitriol had been precipitated upon the iron, which had been dissolved in turn, and thus the appearance of a transformation had been effected.

A little before this, the public attention had been excited by a declaration from M. Geoffroi,[1] that by a certain union of clay and linseed-oil, iron had been formed. The high character for talent, learning, and probity borne by this eminent man, caused his assertion to be regarded with respect by all, and with credit by many. The Alchemists, of course, rejoiced. If it were possible, even without a metal, to make iron, much more was it so to make gold by means of an inferior metal. Thus much is certain, that by means of heat and the application of linseed-oil, iron was obtained from clay, in which it had before existed merely as a colouring oxyde; and when M. l'Emeri, after a few experiments, pointed out this fact, namely, the pre-existence of the iron, M. Geoffroi candidly acknowledged the error into which he had been led, and all the hopes founded upon his experiment were dashed to the ground.

This was in 1707: and, five years previously, a transmutation, of a very different nature, was laid claim to by M. Homberg—not the transmutation of lead, or any inferior substance into gold, but the

[1] Pluche, Hist. du Ciel, and Memoires de l'Acad. des Sciences. 1707.

change of gold itself into[1] glass. If this had really been effected, M. Homberg might have proceeded in his alchemical career with full certainty of success. But, although he declared that he had more than once performed this transformation himself, no other person was able to produce the same results. Among those who attempted the vain and very unprofitable task, was the landgrave[2] of Hesse Cassel, who had apparatus made for the purpose; but neither he nor any who tried succeeded, save Homberg himself.

Half a century before this we have that strange mixture of facts ascertained by experiment, and theory grounded upon truths merely supposed—the treatise "on Bodies" by Sir Kenelm Digby. He maintained that light was material,[3] and that it came in straight lines from the sun; a theory supposed to be proved afterwards by Newton, and which is now again given up in favour of the undulatory theory. But while this is to be placed to the account of Sir Kenelm, as a mark of clear investigation and sound judgment, what shall we say to the theory of electricity which he proposes, or rather to his explanation of the few electrical phenomena known in his day. "Amber," he says, "when rubbed, emits certain rays of oily steam, which, when a little cooled by the external air, are condensed and rapidly drawn back by a principle of attraction to the body from which they proceeded; they also carry with them, by means of their unctuous character, all those light

[1] Pluche, Hist. du Ciel, and Memoires de l'Acad. des Sciences, 1702.
[2] Hartsocker's Physique.
[3] Page 153.

bodies to which they have adhered, such as chaff, pieces of paper, and the like, in the same manner as if a single drop of oil be placed at the end of a wand, and the wand be dashed hastily forwards, the drop of oil will be elongated without being flung off from the stick, and if during this elongation it touch any light body it will bring it back to the stick, though the stick itself never touched it."

In this hypothesis, erroneous as it is, there is much that deserves notice, because it shows, in a remarkably clear way, the impatient spirit of theorizing which so slowly gave way to the inductive philosophy. An effect is produced,—the first thing the student does is to invent a theory, often displaying great ingenuity no doubt, by which that effect is fitted with a cause; but it may be that the effect is produced by one of those subtle operations of Nature which baffle human investigation; the theory is, however, made, and the consequence is that an analogous operation of Nature is accounted for by the same theory; if anything occurs which seems contradictory, the objections of Nature are overruled, and a system, grounded upon abstract reasoning is established, which seems to place within the grasp of the student a power over the elements, and a facility in imitating their effects.

What can be said to the relation by a grave historian,[1] of such an event as the following:—"A little while after this the king set out to make his oblation to the Church of the Three Kings at Cologne; when he was there Albertus Magnus, Bishop of Ratisbon,

[1] Antonius Matthæus Vetera, Monumenta, vol. v. p. 540.

very humbly asked the king that he would honour him by partaking of his hospitality at the feast of the Epiphany. To this the king, hoping to see some strange thing, very readily agreed. His vows being performed he proceeded together with his family to the residence of the bishop, the bishop received them magnificently, and led the king from the dining-room to the garden, where the trees were arranged in wonderful beauty. The servants were present, and everything necessary for conviviality. At the same time there was a severe winter, accompanied by intense cold, and the ground was covered with snow; the family of the king began to inquire if it was intended that the king should feast in this cold garden. And when the king, and the bishops, and the other members of the retinue were seated, each according to his rank, waiting for the repast: on a sudden all the ice and snow vanished, and in its place there was a mild summer, and the sun shone powerfully, and the grass grew of itself with alacrity from the earth; the trees blossomed wonderfully, and soon terminated in fruit fit to eat, and the birds of various kinds sang, by which the guests were exceedingly delighted. After a time the heat became so powerful that many of the company threw off part of their garments and betook themselves to the shade of the trees. The attendants also brought to the table the various fruits. The king was exceedingly delighted upon seeing such wonderful things. At last, however, the servants who had ministered disappeared, and the birds vanished, together with the fruit of the trees, and the winter returning, all things

were as before, so that every one hastened to the fire."

This tale was extensively believed, but no one ever suspected that it was by means of diabolical aid that Albertus Magnus performed such wonderful works. He lived, as we shall see, in great and universal esteem, was patronised and promoted by the pope, and looked upon as a sound theologian. He was considered, however, to have prosecuted his researches into the arcana of Nature with so much success, as to have discovered the true theory of vegetable and animal life, and that he had also attained so great a mastery over the elements that he could hasten or retard their operations at his pleasure. Accordingly we are told of the trees, in a few hours, budding forth into leaf, producing fruit, and ripening that fruit so that it was fit to be eaten; the birds, too, advanced to maturity in the same rapid way, and then, as though by this violent effort their vital force was exhausted, all returned into a wintry state again.

CHAPTER II.

THE RECIPES FOR, AND THE ALLEGED SUCCESS OF, TRANSMUTATION, ETC.

THE various recipes given for the transmutation of metals, and indeed all recipes for alchemical secrets are written in a manner so purposely obscure, that if there ever were any meaning in them, it is quite impossible at the present time to say what it was. The students of the art were always told, that under the enigmatical language which caused them so much difficulty, was concealed the direction for a very simple and easy process; that though a veil was thrown over the face of their great goddess, that veil might by her persevering worshippers be removed; and, if ever so long a life were spent in fruitless attempts to fathom the mysteries of alchemy, yet their discovery at the eleventh hour would amply compensate for the previous labor and anxiety. Raymond Lully,[1] whose works are as voluminous as his fame is great, remarks, "In the art of our magistery nothing is hid by the philosophers except the secret of the art, which is not lawful for any man to reveal, and which, if it were done, he should be cursed, and should incur the indignation of the Lord, and should die of an apoplexy." The con-

[1] See Rev. Sec. Sp. p. 41.

clusion of Chaucer's "Chanon Yeoman's Tale,"[1] which, oddly enough, Ashmole has admitted into the "Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum," is very much to the same purpose, except that the poet advises, since there is so great a secret, which is so by the especial Providence of God, man shall not attempt to discover it. The Alchemists, on the contrary, say that it is only intended to be concealed from the profane; and that if any man, by long study, do attain to its knowledge, then to him is it revealed by the Divine favor. The mixture of religion and Alchemy will be found pervading every treatise on the subject; and towards the close of the series of "Hermetic Philosophers," gave rise to a peculiar school, which will be mentioned in its proper place. Hermes Trismegistus,[2] in one of the treatises ascribed to him, directs the adept to catch the flying

[1] " 'Tell me the rocke,' good sir, quoth he, 'tho'
Of that water, if it be your will.'
'Nay, nay,' quoth Plato, 'certain that I nyl
The philosopheris were y-sworne ech-one
That they shuld discover it unto none;
Ne in no book it write in no manere,
For unto Christ it is so lief and dear,
That he wol not that it discovered be,
But where it liketh to his deity
Man to enspyre and eke for to defend
'When that hym liketh, lo! this is his end.
Then conclude I thus, sens the God of Heaven
Ne wyl not that the philosopheris nemen,
How that a man shall come unto this stone
I rede as for the best, let it alone.
For whoso maketh God his adversary,
As for to werke any thing in contrary
Unto His will, certes never shall he thrive,
Tho' that he multiply terme of his live.
And there a point, for ended is my tale,
God send every true man bote of his bale.' "
CHAUCER'S *Cant. Tales; Chanon Yeoman's Tale*, conclusion.

[2] See Hume on Chemical Attraction, p. 14.

bird, and to drown it, so that it fly no more; by which is meant, the fixation of quicksilver by combination with gold. It is after this to be subjected to the action of "aqua regia," by which its soul will be dissipated, and it will be united to the red eagle (muriate of gold). This is enigmatical enough; but it promises something. There is, however, a fragment preserved in Ashmole, which certainly does not tend to mislead the student by rash encouragement. It is this:—

> "I asked Philosophy, how I should
> Have of her the thing I would.
> She answered me, when I was able
> To make the water malleable;
> Or else the way if I could find
> To measure out a yard of wind,
> Then shalt thou have thine own desire
> When thou canst weigh an ounce of fire;
> Unless that thou canst do these three,
> Content thyself, thou get'st not me." [1]

We must now turn to fuller recipes, rather as matters of curiosity than as casting any light upon the science. The effects of Alchemy are to be sought in the lives and not the works of the adepts, in their influence upon Moral and Natural Philosophy,—on Medicine, and even on Theology; but not in those collections which, under the name of Hermetic treatises, are now doomed to everlasting oblivion. One of the shortest, and, as it professes, the clearest of these recipes, is that given in a manuscript in the Cambridge University Library,[2] illustrated by many colored drawings of dragons, eagles, crucibles, and alembics, all of which have an especial reference to the subject. It is of no very great antiquity, and

[1] Theat. Chem. Brit. p. 435.
[2] G. G. viii. 1.

probably may be referred to the beginning of the seventeenth century; but, on account of its great pretension to clearness and comprehensibility, it may be more useful here than older and more recondite documents.

After much religious matter, and exhortations to holiness of life, the writer proceeds, — "I do therefore faithfully testify that the true subject of this art is quicksilver, and this in a double manner, namely, either quicksilver natural, or quicksilver of bodies; that is, the bodies of Sol and Luna into Mercury, — for many and strange things may be performed with either, singly by themselves, or joined together, for it is true that the conjunction of Mercury, of Sol, or Luna, with the compound Mercury, or the bodies or oil of Sol or Luna, dissolved in *aquâ mercuriali*, doth much hasten the operation of this medicine for metals; but there needs not, as absolutely necessary, any more than the common mercury or quicksilver, either for elixirs or precious stones; only small natural precious stones are to be dissolved in the *aquâ mercuriali*, so shall you have such stones again as you dissolve, and of what bigness you desire, far exceeding the natural ones. I have now given into thy hands a great secret, in letting thee know, with so much ease, such true matter of the philosopher's stone. I shall, in the next place, give thee a small, and indeed but a small light, to the preparation of common mercury or quicksilver, for the production of such rare secrets of Nature. For common mercury, as Nature produceth it, is not fit for such operations, nor can

they any way be performed by it, for our mercury is not common mercury, or quicksilver, but is made out of it by a true philosophic skill or wisdom, for it is not the whole mercury, but its subtle, spiritual, aërial, and fiery part, the earthy and watery being prudently and wisely separated for the manifestation of our mercury.

"First, then, prepare the mercury by a due philosophical operation until thou hast purged and separated him from his extremes, earth and water; dissolve it then rightly into a milky crystalline silvery liquor or water, which in three or four months to be done; but being once dissolved thou mayest ever after dissolve more mercury in forty days, for mercury once dissolved dissolveth itself ever after to infinity, and distil it perfectly until it have no fæces in its composition. After distillation bring it back to putrefaction, and when it is blackish distil it again, so shalt thou have two oils, a white silvery oil, and at last a very red blood-like oil which is the element of fire. The white oil serves for the multiplying the white elixir, and the making of all precious stones by dissolving small ones in it, for it will presently dissolve them, and then in a gentle heat of ashes congeal them again, and they far exceed any natural ones both in lustre, virtue, and hardness. The red oil is for the multiplying of the red elixir even to an infinite height in projection, which when it is by often multiplication brought to a fixed oil, thou mayest then do magical, yet natural operations with it. To make the elixir thou mayest proceed thus when thou hast dissolved the common mercury; purify also the fæaes

which remain, and thou shalt have a clear and bright salt: dissolve this salt in the white oil, put the mixture into a philosophical egg, hermetically sealed, and by degrees of fire congeal it, and fix it; being fixed it is the white medicine which, fermented with Luna, may be cast upon purged Venus, which it will transmute into most fine Luna. Multiply it with the white oil. If thou wouldst have the red elixir put to it some of the red oil, and by requisite degrees of heat congeal and fix it as before, and ferment it with Sol, and multiply it with the red oil, the aforesaid white salt being dissolved in it. Dissolve it and congeal it until it will congeal no more, so will it remain an oil, and its proportion is almost infinite. But endeavour not to multiply it any more for fear thou shouldst lose it; for it is then so fiery that it will penetrate the glasses and vanish, leaving the glass stained like a ruby,—make projection with it upon what metal thou wilt, and thou shalt have most fine Sol, far finer than the natural Sol."

This is what the writer calls a clear and substantial account of the process of Alchemy. If this be clear and substantial what must that be which is acknowledged to be dark and intricate. This recipe is curious, because it speaks of the formation of precious stones, and implies the discovery of the second great object of the Alchemists, viz. the universal solvent, or the alkahest, the absurdity of which notion was exposed by Lavoisier. He inquired if the solvent were universal, what vessels would hold it? The idea afforded only this one absurdity, that of supposing the solvent universal as to its effects. The experiments

of Becquerel in France, and of Crosse in England, amply demonstrate that the operations of Nature in the formation of minerals may, on a small scale, be performed by the electrician. The Alchemists did not expect to make diamonds, or even to make gold, out of that which was an essentially different substance. The baser metal was to be intrinsically purified; that terreous matter which caused it to differ from gold was to be "burnt and purged away," the fragments of the diamond were to be dissolved and reunited, or the ordinary flint was to be treated like the baser metal; and there were not a few who, as we shall by and by see, viewed the mysteries of religion in connection with the hermetic philosophy, and who asserted that such words as these: "And this once more signifyeth the removal of those things which were shaken, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain," applied to three alchemical studies, and were like the writings of Hermes and Artephius to be interpreted with especial reference to the action of the philosopher's stone. The MSS. quoted above assume also that the three great objects of the philosopher's search, namely, the transmuting agent—the universal, solvent, and the universal remedy—in other words, the philosopher's stone, the alkahest and the elixir of life, were essentially the same body, causing by its purifying power the base and imperfect substance to cast aside its impurities, and exhibit itself in the most simple and perfect state, bringing back health and youth to the shattered constitution, and, when pure, dissolving and decomposing all the bodies in order to exhibit them in a renovated and more complete form.

Baptista Porta, in his noted work on "Natural Magic," has a whole book upon what he calls Alchemy. He acknowledges that he does not "promise[1] any golden mountains, as they say, nor yet that philosopher's-stone which the world hath so great an opinion of—which hath been bragged of in many ages, and happily attained unto by some; neither yet do I promise here that golden liquor whereof, if any man do drink, it is supposed that it will make him immortal. But it is a mere dream; for, since the world itself is mutable, and subject to alterations, therefore whatsoever the world produceth is subject to destruction." Indeed, in the very same chapter, he commends Dioclesian for having destroyed all the treatises extant on Alchemy, and expresses his coincident opinion with Demetrius Phalereus:— "That what the Alchemists should have gotten, they got not; that what they had they lost; and the transmutation which they sought, took place, not on the metal in their furnaces from lead to gold, but in their own circumstances from good to bad." The very next[2] chapter, however, treats "of tin, and how it may be converted into a worthier metal." He remarks that the difference between tin and silver consists in the following particulars:—1. That tin makes a crackling noise when bended, from which silver is free. 2. That it is of a duller and paler color. 3. That it is considerably lighter: and, 4thly, That it is much softer. He proposes, then, to treat tin in such a way as to heighten and improve its color, to augment its weight and hardness, and to

[1] Book. v. Proem. [2] Chap. i.

obviate the crackling sound which it makes when bended; and then he observes that though the tin is not changed into silver, yet the latter metal is so successfully counterfeited, that the false cannot be distinguished from the true. The first process to which it is to be subjected is that of reducing it to powder, or rather to small grains, which is done by melting and boiling it, and then continually stirring it till it is cold, sifting the grains, and remelting the larger ones, and so on till the whole is reduced to grains of the requisite smallness. When this is done, it is to be hammered, and then again melted into one body again. After being seven times remelted, it will lose its softness and its crackling noise, especially if repeatedly made hot and quenched in the oil of walnuts. "Thus we have declared the matter, how to extract these accidents from it; but all this time we have not showed how it may be transformed into silver, which we are now to speak of." He now directs us to put the small grains of tin into a strong vessel, and to put it on a vehement fire. The tin is to be stirred for six hours together, at a white heat, without melting; and if any part should unluckily melt, then the whole work must be gone over again. When it will bear this intense heat without melting, it is to be subjected to the heat of a glass furnace for three or four days, which will make it perfectly white; then to be dissolved in vinegar, and the sediment, when the vinegar is boiled away, is to be melted with some fine lead. It then "becomes wonderfully good silver." But this is a marvellous labor, and not to be achieved without very great difficulty.

Tin may be made into lead by simply reducing it to powder and melting it again; and lead into tin, by merely washing it frequently. Receipts follow for changing iron into copper, and for giving iron or brass the appearance of silver; but the most important is that for changing silver[1] into gold. We had before directions for the transmutation of lead into tin, and tin into silver. The last step, therefore, of the Alchemical ladder will be to change the transmuted silver into gold. This, then, is the formula:—Make a lye of tartar; put quicklime into a vessel with a false bottom pierced full of holes. Then pour the lye upon the lime, and when the liquor has drained, then remove it. Powder antimony, put it into this liquor, and set it over a fire to boil; the liquor will be purple; boil and strain, and continue this process till the purple color is no more visible. Then let the water evaporate, and put the powder remaining behind into a crucible, with plates half of gold and half of silver, and the whole will be transmuted into gold.

These operations are given without any parade of religious advice; indeed, Porta was not in a condition to affect sanctity of character: some parts of his works place him even in a contemptible light. But, though he occasionally uses expressions when treating of the transmutation of metals, which seem to indicate that he considered his recipes capable of effecting genuine changes, yet he sometimes treats them rather as clever impositions.

The next book of his "Natural Magic" treats of

[1] Book v. chap. vi.

precious stones, and how they may be counterfeited; but this is not by the solution and re-crystalization of such stones, but by staining glass, and putting colored foils under the setting,—a practice which was comparatively modern in the days of this writer. He professes generally to have either performed himself, or seen others perform the experiments which he relates; and, although he occasionally contents himself with the authority of Pliny or Paracelsus, his profession is not without apparent truth. The slow progress of Nature in the formation of gems and metals was generally understood, though the agents by which it is effected were not discovered.

> "The diamond's pure, unsullied light,
> Is not the child of simple years;
> A host of ages brings to sight
> The crystal that the sovereign wears."

Such was the idea entertained concerning the precious metals in particular, and many of the less enthusiastic among chemists, who were unwilling to risk their property in the hope of transmutation, were yet led by the taste of that period, to experiment on the combination and imitation, both of gold, silver, and precious stones. In the course of such experiments many new and extraordinary things were discovered, and the long list of occult properties attributed to precious stones almost entirely refuted. Leonardo Camillo, in his Mirror of Stones, Pliny before him, and many others afterwards, relate such particulars as these, that the amethyst repels drunkenness, and the diamond neutralizes the effects of the loadstone; that the kinocetus will cast out

devils, and the ætites attract gold. "There are,"[1] says Baptista Porta, "many vain and ignorant persons who would reconcile the ancient writers, and excuse these absurdities, not observing the mischief they do to the republic of learning. New writers building on their ground, and thinking them true, add to them and invent and deduce other experiments from them which are more incorrect than the principles upon which they rest. Thus the blind leads the blind, and both fall into the ditch. Truth must be searched, loved, and professed, by all men; nor must any men's authority, old or new, keep us from it." While these wonderful and occult properties of stones, and of every other natural product, were matters of universal belief, it appears that, with singular inconsistency, they were never made the test of genuineness. The manufacture of counterfeit stones was carried on among the Romans with considerable success. They knew how to alter the colors of gems, and by putting together layers of chalcedony[2] and cornelian, to make imitations of the sardonyx, a stone which bore a high price, and so skilfully was the juncture effected that even the best judges were occasionally deceived. No fraud was more lucrative than this, and yet, among the proofs which were offered of a stone's genuineness, no one mentions the trial of these "occult properties." There was a stone, polytrix, which would cause the hair to fall off the heads of those who bore it; anachitis, that when used in divination, called forth

[1] Book vii. chap. liii.
[2] Pliny, Nat. Hist. lib. xxxvii. cap. xii.

spirits from water; synochitis, which kept them above the surface while interrogated; dendritis, which, if placed under a tree about to be cut down, would prevent the axe from becoming blunt, or having its edge turned. These, however, we may suppose were stones not often brought to market, and their only value lay in their occult properties; but the diamond and the amethyst were used for ornament, and their genuineness was a matter of mercantile moment. Pliny gives many ways of ascertaining whether such stones are genuine or not, such as scratching with an agate, but he does not propose that a person who feared an amethyst to be counterfeit should try its power of preventing drunkenness. He states that there were in his hands books which no reward should tempt him to name; books, in which the art of making counterfeit gems was taught in a very complete and perfect manner. The art of counterfeiting gold was not so successfully practised: Archimedes, by finding a mode of ascertaining the specific gravity of bodies, had given it a blow which it could never recover. To extract gold from substances in which it was known or supposed to exist, promised a more prosperous result, and Caligula[1] made an attempt to obtain it from orpiment (auripigmentum). The orpiment of Syria, a mineral in great request among painters, and bearing a high price, was that which he used; he is said to have made very excellent gold, but in a proportion so small to the amount of orpiment consumed, that the experiment was by no means

[1] Pliny, Nat. Hist. lib. xxxiii. cap. iv.

an advantageous one, nor did he repeat it. The mixture of silver and gold, called electrum, must not be passed over without notice, because it was not only endowed with some very marvellous qualities—but it was a state into which the transmuted metal was expected to pass before it reached that of gold: it was called sometimes in the mystical language of the Alchemists, the Prince,[1] gold being the King, and silver the Queen. It had the power of shining more brilliantly by torch- or candle-light, than either pure gold or pure silver, and was highly esteemed by the ancients. At the temple of Minerva at Lindus in Rhodes, was a cup made of this metal, given by Helen; it was made to the exact measure of one of her breasts, and was an object of curiosity and universal admiration. The chief virtue of electrum was in discovering poisons. It was said, that if any deleterious liquid was put in a cup of this metal it would continue to hiss and bubble, and semicircles resembling rainbows would be visible on the surface. This fable was afterwards transferred to the Venice glass, which shivered if poison was poured into it.

It will be necessary just to notice that, besides such directions as that given from the Cambridge MSS. for the philosopher's stone, there were some of a more allegorical character; and among such there is one not destitute of literary merit, ascribed to Alexander Sethon, an unfortunate adventurer, who was treated with great cruelty by the Elector of Saxony, in order to make him communicate the

[1] Some of the French Alchemists called the regulus of antimony "the Dauphin." Pluche, Hist. du Ciel, vol. ii. p. 39.

secret of transmutation. It is called "The Philosophical Enigma," and commences thus:—"It fell out upon a time, when I had sailed almost all my life, from the Arctic Pole to the Antarctic, that, by the singular providence of God, I was cast upon the shore of a certain great sea; and, though I well knew and understood the passages and properties of the sea upon that coast, yet I knew not whether in those coasts was bred that little fish called remora, which so many men of great and small fortunes have hitherto so studiously sought after. But, whilst I was beholding the sweet singing mermaids swimming up and down with the nymphs, and being weary with my foregoing labours, and oppressed with divers thoughts, I was, with the noise of waters, overtaken with slumber, and while in a sweet sleep there appeared to me a wonderful vision, which is this,—I saw Neptune, a man of an honorable old age, going forth out of our sea, with his three-toothed instrument called a trident, who, after a friendly salute, led me into a most pleasant island. This goodly island was situated towards the south, being replenished with all things respecting the necessity and delight of man. Virgil's Elysian fields might scarce compare with it. All the banks round about were beset with green myrtles, cypress, and rosemary; the green meadows were covered with flowers of all sorts, both fair and sweet; the hills were set forth with vines, olive-trees, and cedar-trees, in a most wonderful manner; the woods were filled with orange and lemon-trees, and the highways were planted on both sides with laurels and pomegranate-trees woven most

artificially one within the other, and affording a most pleasant shadow to the traveller. After expatiating for some time upon the beauties of the country, the writer goes on to say, that Neptune led him to a beautiful orchard, where he beheld seven remarkable trees, and two, "as chiefest, more eminent than the rest, one of which did bear fruit like the sun, most bright and shining, and the leaves thereof were like gold. The other brought forth fruit that was most white, yea, whiter than the lilies, and the leaves thereof were as fine silver. Now these trees were called by Neptune, the one the tree of the sun, the other, the tree of the moon." In this lovely and resplendent island there was, however, one serious defect, there was no water. Some tried to dig wells, and laid pipes, but all in vain; for, though water was obtained by this means, it was of a poisonous quality, and none was of any value save that obtained from the solar and lunar trees. While the dreamer contemplated with wonder these things, Neptune vanished, and a great man, having the name of Saturn engraved on his forehead, appeared. Saturn now gathered the fruit from the solar tree, and dissolved it in the water which he had previously extracted from the same tree. When the dreamer inquired of Saturn how this was, he received the following reply, "This water of life having power to better the fruit of this tree, so that afterward, neither by planting nor grafting, but only by its own odor, it may convert the other six trees into its own likeness." He then holds a discourse with Saturn, in which the wonderful properties of this tree and this water are still

further elucidated, and at last, "I required of him again,—'Sir, do many know that water, and hath it any proper name?' He cried out, saying, 'Few know it, but all have seen it, and do see it and love it. It hath many and various names, but its proper name is the water of our sea, the water of life, not wetting the hands.'" To some more questions Saturn willingly answered; but when the inquirer pressed for a plain simple name to this water of life, "He cried with a loud voice, so that he wakened me from sleep." Then Neptune comes forward again, and some rather metaphysical discourse passes between him and the "sleeper awakened," who is soon restored by Neptune to Europe.

Another very pleasing allegory, and abounding in poetical description, is "Hermes' Bird," a poem published by Ashmole in his "Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum," and ascribed by him to Raymond Lully,[1] translated by Cremer. It describes a garden, in which a certain bird is singing.

"Middes the garden stode a fresh lawrer,
Thereon a bird syngying both daie and night,
With shining fideris brighter than gold were,
Which wyth hir song made hevy hertis lyght,
For to behold yt was an hevenly syght,
How towerd evyn and in the dawnying
Sche did her payne most as news to sing.

"Esperus enforced hyr corage,
Towerd evyn when Phœbus went to rest
Among the braunches to hyr advauntage
To syng her complyn[2] as yt was best,
And at the rysyng to the Queen Alcest,
To syng ageyne as yt was to hyr dew,
Erly on the morrow the day star to salue.

[1] Page 467.
[2] Complins—a service of the Roman Catholic Church.

"Yt was a very heavenly melody,
Evyn and morne to here the Byrdis song,
And the sote sugeryd armony
Of uncoud warbelis and twenes drew along,
That all the garden of the noyse yrong,
Tyl on a daie that Titan shone ful clere,
The byrde was trapped and caught in a panter."

The bird, however, now refused to sing, and thus expressed her resolution to the churl who had caught her:—

"'But tho' my cage yforged were of golde,
And penacles of beryl and chrystal,
Y remember a proverbe sayde of olde,
Who lysit his freedome in sooth he ys in thrall.
For me had laver on a branche smalle,
Merily syng among the woodis greene
Than in a cage of golde tho' bryght and clene.

"'What vayles the lyon to be kynge of beasts
Fast shut up in a tower of stone alone,
Or an egele that lies under straight cheynes,
Called also kynge of fowles everich one;
Fye on lordshipe when liberty is gone.
Answer hereto, and yt nat a starte,
Who syngeth mere that syngeth not with herte.

"Songe and preson have none accordaunce:
Trowis thou I wyl syng yn thy presun?
Songe procedeth of joye and of playsaunce,
And presun causeth deth and destruction;
Ryngyng of fetteris maketh no mere soun,
Or how shuld he be gladsome and jocounde,
Ageyn hes wyl that lyth in cheynes bound.'

"The churl, in answer to all this and much
More, replies like a churl.
'Well,' quothe the churle, 'sith then yt wyl not be
That Y get my desyre by my talking,
Maugre thy wyl thou shalt chuse one of three,
Within a cage ryght merily to sing,
Or to the kychyn I thy bodye bring,
Pull thy federis that bin so bryght and clere,
And bake or rost thee then to my dignere.'"

The bird replies, that she is too small for such a purpose, and, in fine, persuades the churl to set her at liberty; she then sings to him as a reward, "The

wysdomes three" of the Hermetic Philosophy, telling at the same time, that, by reason of his churlishness, the secret was not within his comprehension, and ends her lay :—

> " 'It were but follye more wyth thee to carpe,
> Or to teche thee of wysdom more or lesse ;
> Y holde hym madde that bryngeth forth his harpe,
> Theron to teche a rode for doyled Asse,
> And madde ys he that syngeth a Fole a masse,
> But he most madde that doth hys bysiness,
> To teche a chorl the termes of gentleness.' "

This poem stands deservedly next to Geoffrey Chaucer's, Chanon Yeoman's tale, in Ashmole's Collection, and it is a very favourable specimen of the poetry of the period to which he refers it.

There are many recipes for the alkahest, but those only are worthy of note which identify this, as well as the red elixir of life, with the stone of transmutation. The term is first found in Paracelsus (*De viribus Membrorum*), and is thought, with some reason, to be merely a contraction of the words *Alcali est.* The Alchemists in general, and Paracelsus in particular, were very fond of thus mysteriously abbreviating the names of their drugs, aro-ph., for aroma philosophorum, is an instance from that adept; luru-mone-cap-urbre,[1] or luru-vapo-vir-con-utriet, for powdered charcoal, from Roger Bacon. The properties of the alkahest were, that it dissolved all substances in nature, making them liquid, and destroying every impurity ; it separates gradually, but completely, from the dissolved body, leaving it again in a solid form. Van Helmont declared that he was in possession of the secret, but he did not com-

[1] De secretis Operibus, cap. ii.

municate his knowledge, and the matter was thus left open to the conjectures of Alchemists; various opinions were mooted and defended, as to the constituents of this universal *solvent.* Becker supposed it to be sea salt,—Glauber, nitre. The possibility of there being such an agent has long been disproved, but it makes a prominent figure in the reveries of the Theologico-Alchemists.

One important object of Alchemy, was the discovery of a medicine alike to cure all diseases, and to prevent their recurrence. The origin of this idea must be sought in the Garden of Eden, and there also shall we find its sufficient refutation. Before enlarging on the many ways in which the remedy was sought, we will endeavour to trace the reasoning by which its existence was inferred: we shall see that there was scarcely a nation, however remote, or however barbarous, that had not some notion of this powerful medicine.

Adam, say the Alchemists, was the first adept: he knew all the secrets of Nature, and whatsoever might be done by human power, could doubtless be performed by Adam. He was so well versed in the nature of animals, as to be able to give appropriate names to all the newly-created beasts; and his continual communion both with angelic beings and the Divine Maker of all, had made him well-acquainted with spiritual essences and their properties, so far as they could be comprehended by man's yet unfallen intellect. This perfection of physical and metaphysical knowledge, not attained by the labour of study and observation, but infused into

his mind immediately by the Author of all wisdom, has been enjoyed in like degree by none of Adam's descendants. Yet because God talked to Abraham as a man talketh with his friend; because Moses was divinely inspired to write the history of those seven days wherein God made the heavens and the earth; because Solomon was filled with knowledge and understanding, and wrote by means of that inspired wisdom on subjects of Natural History and Philosophy; Abraham, Moses, and Solomon, are also reckoned among the adepts. If Alchemy be a true science, it was certainly known to Adam, with almost the same certainty to Solomon, and with great probability to Noah, Abraham, and Moses. In the garden, created for man's dwelling, was every kind of tree that was good for food, every appliance which could render his life delightful; but there were two trees of a mystic character. Yet, though the one was prohibited, and the other untasted, they were of far more importance to man's fate than all the rich fruits and glowing foliage of the rest; these were, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the yet more wonderful tree of life. Of the first we cannot speak at length here. Adam already knew good; the evil he knew not till he tasted the forbidden fruit. The Jewish Rabbins have, in many cases, expressed their opinions, that the fall of the angels was unknown to Adam in his innocence; but that by some intellectual operation of this fruit, he became aware of their guilt, their fall, and some law, not of matter, but of spirit, by which, in spite of their resisting will, they were subservient to the

power of God. They go on to say, that the knowledge embraced that of talismans and cabalistic spells, by which the spirits of evil might be made obedient to man, and also removed in some degree the human race from the protection of the Supreme; giving them, instead, a power dreadful in its nature, and ruinous in its consequences. This power Adam used not; he, however, communicated the knowledge of it to his children. Seth and his descendants made no use of it, but Cain and his family were the proto-sorcerers. After the flood, Ham continued the same iniquity, while Shem and Japheth remained comparatively free from it. The tree of life was of a different nature, and of this we must speak more largely. It has been held by some of the most learned, as well among the Jews as among Christians, that though death came into the world by sin, still man's body was not created essentially immortal.[1] It was endowed with so much perfection, as to endure for a very long period without apparent decay. At the end of that time, however, its vitality would have been expended, and were it not renewed from some external sources its powers would fail. The tree of life was intended to supply that waste of vital power. This theory receives strong confirmation from the circumstance related in Genesis. That the tree of life grew in the midst[2] of the garden, and that it was within man's reach,[3] we gather from the inspired records; yet, though the fruit was not prohibited, he did not eat of it. This seems suf-

[1] See Faber's Treatise on the Three Dispensations, vol. i. book i.
[2] Gen. ii. 9. [3] Gen. iii. 22.

ficient to show us that it was not intended as food, and surely the very name intimates for what it was designed. But when, by eating of the tree of knowledge, Adam and Eve had forfeited their right to a paradisiac abode, we have the following remarkable words:—"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east end of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."[1] From this, it seems that man's exclusion from the garden of Eden, inasmuch as it was an exclusion from the tree of life, was in itself a sentence of death, and that had Adam eaten of the fruit of that mystic tree, he would have lived, if not for ever, yet to a much more distant period than it was in accordance with the Almighty's design he should under these altered circumstances do. It may be noticed that the words of Moses do not imply that once eating of "the tree of life" would be sufficient to procure for Adam an eternity of existence in this world, but merely that a permanent exile from the garden in which the tree grew would be sufficient to prevent such an event. For this cause, namely, to make the exile permanent, were the cherubim and the flaming sword stationed to keep the way of the tree of life. A new dispensation was announced,

[1] Gen. iii. 23—25.

life everlasting was to be obtained on new conditions, and man, when his body had expended the portion of vitality breathed into it with its first breath of life, was to enter into a new state of existence; his body was "to return unto the dust" out of which it was taken, "and the spirit was to return unto God who gave it."

Thus much, then, it seems, may be inferred from the sacred history, that there was a fruit which by its own properties had the power of renewing youth, and conferring a fresh term of life on the otherwise decaying body, and that man by being prevented from making use of this wonderful provision became subject to bodily death. So far as this the philosopher may go with the alchemist, and even those theologians who are inclined to doubt the theory abovementioned cannot say that it is impossible or improbable. One evidence may be produced in its favour, which to those accustomed to weigh its importance will not seem slight, viz. the concurrent voice of tradition. In the mythology of the East [1] we find among the treasures of the Chawdraratana, the amrita or beverage of immortality, proving the finite nature of the Hindu gods by the fact that they owed their immortality to drinking it. Men might be made immortal by its effects, and it forms no small part of the machinery of that most magnificent poem, "The Curse of Kehama." Again, in the northern system we find a still stronger resemblance—we should say, perhaps, a still purer copy, of the fruit of the tree of life. Iduna,[2] the god-

[1] See Christmas's Universal Mythology, sec. ii.
[2] Christmas's Mythology, sec. ix.

dess of youth, possessed those mysterious apples whieh, when the gods felt themselves growing old and feeble they ate, and were restored to youth and vigour. Among the Chinese the same belief prevailed in another form, and an extraet from a paper eomnuunieated by the author to Fraser's "Magazine" in May, 1835,[1] will set it in a strong light. One of the philosophers having become immortal himself descends from his eelestial abode and meets his son, to whom he gives an amulet and pill of which he says:—

"'After dividing it, and eating a part of it, you will beeome a seer, or immortal.' Mung Seen now examined the pill, whieh was about the size of a pea, and saw with great joy, 'Sinee my father has beeome a God, doubtless on swallowing this I shall not know death. His mother-in-law objected to his thus doing and eoneealed it till her father eame, to whom she showed it, and read likewise the letter of Hoo-tsing-yen. Tae-she immediately broke in pieees the pill, and all three partook of it. Tae-she was at this time seventy years of age, and in his person extremely debilitated; but no sooner had he tasted this wonder medieine than he grew hale and strong; his nerves and sinews reeeived fresh vigour; he laid aside his earriage, and when he walked abroad it was with such rapidity that his servants eould scarcely keep paee with. Ka retained all her beauty, and the strength and health of her youth. None who saw her after partaking of the elixir of life would have supposed her beyond the age of twenty, though in

[1] Horæ Senicæ, No. III. Fraser's Magazine.

truth fifty times had the sun brought about the anniversary of her birth."

Lao Kung was the name of the philosopher, who was most celebrated in China as having discovered this grand secret, and he founded a sect called Tao-tsee,[1] or the sons of the immortals. He professed to be able by means of an elixir prepared from the 'three kingdoms of nature' to restore the powers of the body when decayed by age, and thus to secure an indefinite period of life to his followers. Many thronged to him: mandarins and emperors were among his disciples; and in spite of the deaths which occurred in the due order of nature in quick succession in his society, he still maintained his credit. After his death his followers stated that he had withdrawn to the island of the genii, and they made, as they said, frequent voyages thither to converse with their head and leader. Those who returned never failed to speak of the favour, in which Lao Kung and his sect stood with those mysterious agencies in whose dominions he dwelt, and they related the modes of attaining health and long life, which he had communicated to them. At one time they caused large cisterns to be made in order to collect dews, in which the prince might bathe, and thus preserve himself from the approach of disease. At length the sect gave way to the irresistible influence of Budhism. It would be possible to bring forward instances from the mythology of other nations in which this tradition is embodied. It took a singular shape in the romances of the troubadours. A sort of terres-

[1] Christmas's Universal Mythology, sec. vii.

trial paradise was spoken of, to which was given the name of Cokaigne,[1] a word which is generally derived from the Latin *coquina*, and the original description of this blessed region was an improvement on the golden age, and a substitution of culinary delicacies for the fruits of that primitive period, Subsequently oriental fiction added its charms; spicy groves, rivers of milk, honey, and wine; groups of lovely maidens were supposed to embellish this enchanted ground; and, lastly, the tree and water of life were deduced from the patriarchal times through the

The reader will not be displeased to see here a short but beautiful fabliau translated by Mr. Way, which treats of this subject.

"Well, I wot, 'tis often told,
Wisdom dwells but with the old,
Yet do I of greener age
Boast and bear the name of sage.
Briefly, sense was ne'er conferred
By the measure of the beard.
List, for now my tale begins,—
How to rid me of my sins,
Once I journey'd far from home
To the gate of holy Rome,
There the Pope, for my offence,
Bade me straight in penance thence,
Wandering onwards to attain
The wondrous land that hight Cokaigne.
Sooth to say, it was a place
Bless'd with Heaven's especial grace;
For every road and every street,
Smoked with food for man to eat.
Pilgrims there might halt at will—
There might sit and feast their fill,
In goodly bowers that lined the way,
Free for all and nought to pay.
Through that blissful realm divine,
Roll'd a sparkling flood of wine;
Clear the sky and soft the air,
For eternal spring was there,
And all around the groves among
Countless dance and ceaseless song;
Strife, and ire, and war, were not,
For all was held by common lot

Mahommedan writers, and added to the picture. The country of Cokaigne, and the fountain of perpetual youth were not confined to those which have been considered as the native regions of romance. Sir John Mandeville met with this wonderful fountain near the river Indus, and has given a description of its admirable effects, both in those who lived near it and on himself. It was very odoriferous, tasted of all manner of spice: and of this whosoever drank for two or three days upon a fasting stomach was quickly cured of any internal disorder wherewith he might

And every lass that sported there,
Still was kind, and still was fair;
Free to each as each desired,
And quitted as the year expired;
For once the circling seasons past,
Surest vows no more might last.
But the chiefest, choicest treasure
In that land of peerless pleasure
Was a well to saine the sooth,
Cleped the living well of youth.
There had numb and feeble age
Cross'd you in your pilgrimage;
In those wondrous waters pure,
Laved awhile, you found a cure.
Lustihed and youth appears,
Numb'ring now but twenty years.
Woe is me! who rue the hour,
Once I owned both will and power,
To have gained this precious gift,
But, alas! of little thrift,
From a kind o'erflowing heart,
To my fellows to impart
Youth, and joy, and all the lot
Of this rare enchanted spot.
Forth I fared, and now in vain
Seek to find the place again;
Sore regret I now endure;
Sore regret beyond a cure.
Test and learn from what is pass'd,
Having bliss to hold it fast."

Fabliaux of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, selected by Legrand, translated by Way. Ellis's edition, vol. ii. p. 195.

be afflicted. Those who lived near it, and frequently drank of it had a wonderful appearance of youth during their whole lives. He drank himself three or four times, and fancied his health was better afterwards. Robertson, in his "History of America," relates that a tradition prevailed among the natives of Porto Rico, that in one of the Lucayo islands there was to be found this extraordinary fountain; and incited by the hope of finding it Ponce de Leon ranged from island to island till he discovered not the fountain but Florida. In Owhyhee (or Hawaii) a tradition prevailed that certain natives of that island successfully prosecuted a voyage to a country where the inhabitants enjoyed perpetual youth and health and beauty,—where the fountain of life removed every disease, and every deformity, and where misery and death were unknown; but, alas! they had beheld that which was forbidden to mortal eye, and they all died shortly after their return to Hawaii.

Upon this almost universal agreement of tradition the Alchemists lay great stress; but they adduce other arguments from Holy Writ. This remedy for all diseases, this great restorer of decaying nature, has, they say, the same power over the bodies of men in their present state as it had before the fall. They point to the translation of Enoch and Elijah; these eminent saints never tasted of death; and since, therefore, they are still enjoying a bodily life, how can we suppose that life to be maintained more probably than by eating of the fruit of the tree of life.

Again it is highly probable that the body of man waxed grosser and more earthly after the fall, that

those who were brought into the world by the ordinary way of generation partook far more of the heavy and unintellectual character of matter than the more ethereal, half angelic body of Adam—a body which was the immediate work of the Creator's hand. This, too, was in all probability the mode in which those repeated abridgements of the span of human life, which we hear in Scripture, were carried into execution. From about a thousand years it was gradually reduced to threescore and ten: the body gradually degenerated: it became coarser in its materials, and less exquisite in its workmanship. It partook more of the dust and less of the informing spirit: its duration was made shorter, and its rank lower. Man became a prey to more and severer diseases, until he reached the state in which he now is—a state in which he will be stationary till the world shall be no more. What then would be the effect of this mystic fruit—this universal remedy? It would of course remove the causes of this degeneration: it would purify the body of man from the grosser particles: it would again give the ascendancy to the more ethereal and vital portion of his being, and bring him, as far as the body is concerned, somewhat nearer to that glorious state in which he was when created in the image of God. Such a change in the body could not take place without some alteration, some adaptation in the mind. Some of our most violent passions spring from the gross corrupt state of our bodies: the purer the one the more temperate will be the other. Those persons who are most free from sudden and fierce passions owe

that freedom not so much to their mental superiority as to their happier temperament; and the new science of phrenology has set in a strong light how entirely the passions depend on the physical structure. A medicine, therefore, which acts as this must do, is not only a medicine for the body, but also for the mind; it will not only set the frame free from pain, disease, and decay, but it will make the mental horizon calm, by stilling the gusts of passion, by driving away the clouds with which the grossness of our earthly nature obscures our reason; and "the great light of the majestic intellect" will shine clear and serene over all. To give still further evidence from Scripture, and to throw a still stronger light on this theory, they quote the words of St. Paul in the Epistle to the Corinthians, when speaking of the resurrection. If the body be raised and be destined to eternal life, then it must be raised in a purer and more unearthly state than it is now: accordingly, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."[1] This is, however, by no means a happy translation of the words *Σπείρεται σῶμα ψυχικὸν, ἐγείρεται σῶμα πνευματικόν.* It would have been better rendered, "It is sown a soul-informed body, it is raised a spirit-informed body,"—raised in a condition as happily, or yet more happily constituted than Adam's before the fall. But if the raised body be of the same nature as that of man in a state of innocence, even though finer and purer in degree, it would still need more or less the same means of support—the same security against the waste of vi-

[1] 1 Corinthians, xv. 44.

tality; and, accordingly, in that glance into the New Jerusalem—the heavenly city which was vouchsafed to the favoured disciple, we find, "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it (the heavenly city) and on either side the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."[1] The healing of what nations? Not the nations of the earth,—for in the vision of the apostle, "The first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea."[2] Not surely the nations of the damned, otherwise their worm doth die, and their fire is quenched. And if it be said that the whole is to be taken figuratively, let us ask, of what is the "healing leaf" a figure? If it shadow forth anything it must be a release from some evil; and, except upon this theory, what evil is there from which the risen bodies of just men made perfect can require deliverance? This belief concerning the tree of life is at the bottom of all the alchemical theory of the universal medicine: it has never been in one place so treated as it is here; it is to be gathered from a multitude of obscure hints sometimes couched in scientific, and sometimes in theological terms, scattered through a vast variety of authors, and it is certainly well worthy the consideration of the divine as well of him who wishes to understand the *rationale* of Alchemy. When, however, we have gone thus far

[1] Revelation xxii. 1, 2. [2] Ibid. xxi. 1.

we cannot expect the theologian or the philosopher to accompany the Alchemist in his subsequent deductions: "From the union and perpetual interchange of the elements," say they, "spring all things, and all things may again be resolved into those elements: and whether we call the elements fire, air, earth, and water, with the ancients, or whether we call them, with the moderns, oxygen, hydrogen, azote, carbon, &c., still all material substances are formed of the elements: and in their perpetual circulation do all visible things subsist, grow and decay. From them did God, in his wisdom, make the heavens and the earth: they were the constituent parts of his creation; they, therefore, were the constituent parts of the trees of life and knowledge.

"When man has, by long study, attained to so great a mastery over the elements—so intimate a knowledge of their powers and properties—as to be able to imitate the operations of nature; when he can produce living creatures, such as frogs, lice, and serpents, as the Egyptian magicians are said to have done; when he can mimic the actions of life by galvanising the dead body, and imitate the thunder and lightning by his electrical knowledge,—then may he also hope to find out the composition of this wonderful fruit of life. Its constituent parts are in his hands; he has only to combine and experimentalise till the wished-for result comes to crown his endeavours. Day after day is medical science striding onwards; and in those countries where it is most successfully cultivated, one disease after another is giving way. Plague has become but as a thing that

was; it exists but in far-distant countries. Small-pox is no longer the depopulating and disfiguring scourge that it used to be; syphilis is less fatal every year. And now, the discovery of the vegetable alkalies morphine, narcotine, quinine, strichnine, emetine, piperine, &c., appears to have given a new direction to medico-chemical research. Creosote is a still more extraordinary agent; and while the active principles are thus extracted, why should we despair of finding the elixir of life?"

Such would be the language of an Alchemist, if he were to speak with the light of modern philosophy before his eyes: and, as there is a little plausibility in the theory (which is ancient—the illustrations only are modern), we shall, at the risk of being supposed to beat the air, give a few reasons to show the futility of his hopes. Why were the cherubim, with the flaming-sword, planted at the eastern gate of the garden of Paradise? To keep the way of the tree of life. And it would be folly to suppose that He in whose hands are the issues of understanding, as well as the issues of life, would allow his own counsel to be defeated by his own gift. It has been, according to His good pleasure, that the gradual diminution of man's longevity has taken place. He has, on two occasions, formally pronounced what should be the average duration of life—limiting it first to one hundred and twenty years, and, subsequently to three score and ten: and that theory, however ingenious, cannot be called other than blasphemous, which tells us that His decrees may be set aside, and His designs baffled, by human science.

The laws of life have not, as yet, been investigated, and it is highly probable that they never will be—at least in this world. But, even if they were ever so well understood, it does not at all follow that man would have any control over them, or be able to touch the springs of that machinery by which they act. He might understand them, as he understands those laws by which the planetary bodies roll on in their orbits; but he would, as in that case, be only the passive spectator of God's infinite power and wisdom. The benefits that would result from such knowledge might probably be great, in a medical point of view; but it appears, from what we know, that metaphysical, rather than physical science, would have to rejoice. We shall now proceed to the consideration of the universal medicine, or Elixir of Life.

When the Alchemists had once decided that it was possible for this medicine, by the art of man, to be compounded, the next thing was to ascertain of what nature it was, or, rather, of what materials it might the most easily be obtained. And, as the red elixir, as it was called, was supposed to have not so much the power of transmuting specifically base metals into gold and silver, as the power, generally, of bringing to its highest degree of perfection any substance to which it was applied: many among them decided that the philosopher's-stone was itself the universal medicine. It transmutes lead into gold, they said, because metallic gold is the purest and noblest in which the basis can appear. It transmutes flint into diamonds, by the same power, purging away all their grosser particles, and exhibiting them in the shape

of pure, uncorrupt essences. It had the same effect on plants, preserving only their hidden virtues: and, consequently, if administered to men and animals, it would have the same purifying effect, and would exhibit human nature free, as far as the body is concerned, from all the imperfections that "flesh is heir to."

Descartes imagined that this was not the true secret, but that he had discovered it in a peculiar system of diet. "I never took so much care,"[1] said he to a friend, "to preserve my life as I now do. I formerly thought that were death to happen, it could at most only cut off thirty or forty years, whereas now it cannot surprise me without depriving me at least of a hundred. For it seems certain to me that if we only guarded against certain errors on diet that we are wont to commit, we might, without any other attention, attain to an old age much longer and happier than we now do. But, since I have need of much time and much experience to examine everything proper to this subject, I am now engaged in composing a course of medicines, by which I hope, when so occupied, to obtain some respite from nature, and to be, consequently, the better able, hereafter, to prosecute my design." The Abbé Picot[2] resided sometimes with Descartes, and followed his directions as to diet, being fully persuaded that four or five hundred years would be added thereby to the term of man's natural life. Twelve years after the date of the letter above quoted, Descartes died in the fifty-fifth year of his age. And so certain was Picot that

[1] Lettres, vol. xi. p. 374. [2] Baillie, Vie de Descartes.

the system adopted by him was to be implicitly relied on, that, on hearing of his death, the Abbé declared he must have died by poison, or by some violent death, or he would unquestionably have lived five hundred years.

What the medicines used by Descartes were, we do not know. The rules which he adopted with regard to diet, were very rigid: the greatest regularity, perfect temperance, and frequent fasting, formed the principal parts of his code. He enjoined a far more ascetic diet than Cornaro with far less success. But all that is important to remark here is, first, that Descartes considered it possible to prolong life to the extent of four or five hundred years; and, secondly, that he supposed this might be done by diet and medicines. Sir Kenelm Digby visited Descartes, without giving his name, and after a little conversation, the latter guessed who his visitor was: upon which Sir Kenelm said—"Our speculative discoveries are, indeed, pretty and agreeable; but they are, after all, too uncertain and unprofitable to occupy all a man's thoughts; that life was too short to attain the right knowledge even of necessary things; and, that one who so well understood the nature of the human body, as Descartes, should rather study how it might be preserved from disease and early death, than apply himself to the barren speculations of philosophy."[1] Descartes replied that he had done so; and though he did not suppose it possible to avoid death altogether, he could yet promise to lengthen out the days to those of the patriarchs. On the same point, Ash-

[1] Des Maiseaux, Vie de St. Evremond.

mole, in his notes to the "Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum," gives a digest of a whole host of authorities:—

"It is apparent," says he,[1] "though I deny not but some hereditary corruption is entailed upon posterity from the decayed, mouldering, and rotten natures of our ancestors, that our diseases proceed chiefly from transportation: for, by what we eat or drink as nourishment, the corrupt and harmful, nay deathful qualities, which the Divine malediction on created things, is removed from them into our bodies, and there grow up and multiply; till, having heightened the sal, sulphur, and mercury, into an irreconcilable contestation, through the impurities with which they are loaded and burdened, they introduce a miserable decay, which subsequently becomes a death, and this is the sooner hastened if thereunto we add the heavy load of luxuriousness and gluttony. Yet this death is not natural, but accidental; and, as may appear by what has been said, death arising out of the fruits of the great world, which grow up by transportation; the rebellious disobedience of man provoking God to plant a death in everything he has made, in the curse wherewith he hath cursed the world, and to this the doctrine which the angel taught Esdras is agreeable. And, though it is appointed that all must die, against which decree no elixir has power to resist, yet this medicine is a remedy for the particular corruption of man, to keep back those griefs and diseases which usually accompany and molest old age, insomuch that the death

[1] Page 448.

which man eats with his bread may be brought to a separation, and man may, consequently, in the comfort of an uninterrupted health, spin out his thread of life to the longest end of that nature fallen from original justice. For it is a certain truth, that of what we receive into our bodies Nature finds two substances,—one which with a gladsome appetite she retains to feed vitality,—the other, with an abhorred dislike, she expels, as not only useless, but putrefactive and dangerous. And if thereupon we thoroughly advise with ourselves, we must needs confess that her way is the best to be imitated in separating the pure from the impure (which are joined together in everything), before we make use of them, and where she does manifestly subtract and divide let us not there add and multiply. For, doubtless, the fæces profit nothing, nay, in sick persons they plainly oppress the penetrating virtue of the spirit itself, and commit that separating act to the diseased body, which through weakness is not able to perform the task. The brevity of life came in with the fall of Adam; and, though some of the ancients before the flood lived almost a thousand years, yet certainly their lives were prorogued by the use of this medicine, with which they well knew how to separate and correct the obnoxious qualities of all things; and I much question whether the generality of persons lived so long, or only those who were the true ancestors of Abraham, they being not always the eldest and first begotten of the patriarchs, but such as God chose out of the family to continue the line; and had, by the permission of God, as a singular and

peculiar blessing, this secret traditionally committed to them."

Yet it would seem that it required a particular revelation not only to know what was the medicine, but how to use it when obtained; for in the same work he says:—

"Unless the medicine be qualified as it ought, 'tis death to taste the least atom of it, because its nature is so highly vigorous and strong above that of man; for, if its least parts are able to strike so fiercely and thoroughly into the body of a base and corrupt metal as to tinge and convert it into so high a degree as perfect gold, how less able is the body of man to resist such a force, when its greatest strength is far inferior to the weakest metal? I do believe, and am confirmed by several authors, that many philosophers, having a desire to enjoy perfect health, have destroyed themselves in attempting to take the medicine inwardly, ere they knew the true use thereof, or how to qualify it to be received by the nature of man without destruction."[1] This is a very likely result of the experiment, if we take into consideration the test by which the red elixir was to be proved perfect. In a manuscript in the Cambridge University Library,[2] before quoted, occurs the following direction, "But endeavour not to multiply it any more, for fear thou shouldst lose it, for it is then so fiery that it will penetrate the glasses, and vanish, leaving the glass stained like a ruby." Indeed, so rapid and violent was its supposed operation, and so great the corruption of the human frame, that, if hastily taken,

[1] Page 447. [2] G. G. viii. 1.

it would dissolve nearly the whole body, and cause instant death.

We shall now take a brief review of the pretended longevity of certain adepts, which legends form, as it were, the fabulous ages of chemistry, and notice the modes which they are said to have adopted to attain so long a life. One of them, named Artephius, is reported to have lived upwards of a thousand years; and although no facts are known of his life, nor is it by any means clear that such a person ever lived, yet as the writings which bear his name were once highly esteemed by the philosophers, the stories told of him will at all events show what was expected to be the fruits of study,—what was the great object after which an adept was to strive. His works, or those which bear his name, appear to have been written in the twelfth century; and his "Clavis Majoris Sapientiæ" is preserved in the first volume of Mangetus "Bibliotheca Chemica Curiosa." There is another book attributed to him, called "Liber Secretus," in which he states that the mysteries of the chemical philosophy are so darkly expressed by most writers, that it is impossible to understand them; and, indeed, that this obscurity was not accidental, but designed,—"Is not this an art full of secrets; and believest thou, O fool! that we plainly teach this secret of secrets, taking our words according to their literal interpretation?"[1]

He then goes on to say that, after he became an adept by studying the works of Hermes Trismegistus, he was sometimes very obscure himself; but that, after having lived more than a thousand years, through

[1] Artephii liber secretus.

the use of this wonderful medicine, he found no man besides himself who had discovered it, so obscure were the writings in which it was revealed. He therefore generously wrote a book to declare "truly and sincerely" all things that were wanted for the formation of the philosopher's stone, "except one certain thing, which is not lawful for me to discover to any, because it is revealed or made known by God himself, or taught by some master, which, notwithstanding, he that can bend himself to the search of by the help of a little experience, may easily learn in this book." Of course the book is, if possible, rather more obscure than others on the same mysterious topic, although it is written in rather more intelligible Latin, and with great parade of philosophical simplicity. Some Hermetic writers say of him, that he invented a magnet having a peculiar attraction for the vital parts of human nature; so that by it he extracted the life from other persons for his own benefit, making a vivifying volatile tincture which was only to be taken in at the nostrils, and which rendered all food unnecessary. During the last years of his thousand and twenty-five, he withdrew into a tomb, where he wrote his alchemical works.

The treatise in Mangetus, which bears his name, is an astrological-alchemical treatise; and in no parts more so than in his chapter on animal life, as we shall by and by perceive. He is mentioned by Roger Bacon, and by no earlier writer; and the same fables were then extant about him. Another equally credible story is related of Nicholas Flamel,

who, according to vulgar ideas, was, with his wife, Peronella, consigned to the grave at the close of a long and respectable life. But it appears that they were by no means so foolish as to die; and, after many years, a French traveller[1] obtained news of them in the East, and found that wooden images had been buried, merely to avoid fixing on the adepts the suspicion of immortality; that they had been, since their supposed death, travelling over the world, acquiring knowledge, and associating with those who, like themselves, had successfully studied the Hermetic Philosophy.

In the year 1531,[2] a poor old man, residing at Tarentum, was the subject, it is said, of a very marvellous change at the age of nearly ninety. His skin peeled off, and a new, soft, and smooth skin supplied its place; his muscles again became plump and yielding; the wrinkles disappeared from his face, and the white hairs from his head; dark curling locks replaced the one, and the fresh complexion of youth the other. After fifty years, he again became decrepid with a second age. The case of the Countess of Desmond was very similar to this; and is attested by Lord Bacon and Sir Walter Raleigh. But these are scarcely so remarkable as the instance given by Velasquez of Tarentum, of the Abbess of Manviedro, who, at the age of nearly one hundred, underwent a change like that of the poor old man before noticed. After a severe illness, which, on account of her age, every one supposed

[1] M. Lucas.

[2] Histoires Admirables et Mémorables, p. 697. Douay, 1604.

would terminate fatally, she had a recurrence of the characteristics of youth; a new set of teeth, and a fresh head of hair appeared, and her whole person became like that of a young woman. Maffeus, in his "History of the Indies,"[1] mentions a very remarkable man, who had attained the age of three hundred and thirty-five years, and he did not then appear at all decrepid; he had insensibly been restored to a state resembling youth several times. He asserted that he had had seven hundred wives;[2] and when he died he had attained the age of three hundred and seventy years. In 1564,[3] Count Landonnière discovered a person among the natives of Florida who was reported to have lived upwards of two hundred and fifty years. It was a conjecture with Alchemists that these changes and this longevity were to be attributed to the one universal medicine, perhaps unconsciously taken; and Roger Bacon[4] speaks of an old man who found, while ploughing in Sicily, some yellowish water in a golden vessel, which he imagined to be dew. This, being hot and faint, he swallowed; and it so entirely changed his condition, both bodily and mental, that, from being an old and stupid labourer, he became hale, robust, youthful in appearance, and gifted with an understanding so much improved that he forsook his day-labour, and was received into the service of the King of Sicily, whom, and his successors, he served eighty years. This Bacon tells to Pope Nicholas IV., in

[1] Hist. Indies, lib. xi. c. iv.
[2] Lopez de Castagnada. Hist. Lusit. lib. viii.
[3] Basannier, Hist. de la Floride, i. 95.
[4] De Secretis Artis et Naturæ.

showing the virtues which are to be expected from potable gold. The Rosicrucians boasted that they possessed the means of lengthening man's life to an almost indefinite extent. And Petrus Mornius[1] says that they undoubtedly did possess the perpetual motion, the philosopher's stone, and the universal medicine. He may be considered as qualified to speak concerning their pretensions, since he himself was one of their body, and made certain propositions in their name to the States-General of Holland in 1630, which, however, were not accepted.

There is a romantic tale which has often been made the basis of professed fictions, given in a book of French memoirs. In the year 1681[2] a stranger, who called himself Signor Gauldi, went to reside at Venice, and there attracted some attention by his apparently universal knowledge, his beautiful and valuable collection of paintings, and the singular circumstance that he was never known to write or receive a letter to desire credit, or to make use of notes or bills of exchange. He paid for everything in ready money, and lived in a very respectable style. A nobleman, who was a remarkably good judge of pictures, applied for permission to see the collection of Signor Gauldi, which request was at once complied with. Over the door hung a portrait of Gauldi himself. "This picture, sir," said the nobleman, "is a portrait of your self?" Gauldi bowed. "You look, sir, to be no more than fifty; but I know that painting to be by the hand of Titian, who has been dead one hundred

[1] Arcana totius Naturæ secretissima.
[2] Mémoires Historiques, 1687, tom. i. p. 365.

and thirty years. How is this possible?"—"It is not easy," replied Gauldi, "to know all things that are possible; but there is certainly no crime in my being like a picture by the hand of Titian." The nobleman forebore to speak more on the subject; but afterwards mentioning the circumstance to some of his acquaintance they determined to examine the picture the next day. Before they could put their design in practice, Signor Gauldi had retired to Vienna. Irenæus Philalethes,[1] whose true name is not known, was said to be yet living in the middle of the last century, though concealed like Arthur and Frederic Barbarossa. Tales of this kind furnish what may be called the historical evidence; and they certainly require no comment.

Now, the next thing is to examine what was the nature of the medicine thus wonderfully beneficial, and how it was to be attained. Here we have many various descriptions, some of them written with so much enthusiasm and eloquence that they are not unworthy of notice even on that account. In a work entitled "The Revelation of the Secret Spirit," the author of which is not known, but of which an English translation appeared in 1623, with a curious dedicatory letter to John Thornburgh, Bishop of Worcester, the medicine is thus described:—

"In its first essence it appeareth in an earthly body foul and full of impurities in which it hath a property

[1] This person, who was born about 1612, as it seems from some of his writings, was the author of a book called Introitus apertus ad Seclusum regis Paletium. This is frequently attributed to one Thomas Vaughan, who wrote under the name of Eugenius Philalethes, and the two are often confounded.

and virtue of curing wounds and corruptions within the body of men, it purgeth putrefaction, abiding in any place whatsoever, and cureth all things inwardly and outwardly. In the second essence it appeareth unto the sight in a watery body, somewhat fairer than the first, containing, indeed, corruption, but more plentifully active in virtue, nearer to the truth, and in every work more powerful; in which shape it generally giveth aid to all sickness, both hot and cold, because it is of a hidden nature; chiefly it helpeth those who suffer infirmity in respiration; it chaseth venom from the heart; dissolveth without violence things contained in the lungs; it cleanseth blood; it purifyeth corruption; it preserveth the body from decay; and if thrice in the day it be drank by those who languish it giveth them a good hope of recovery. But in the third essence it appeareth in an airy body, oily, almost freed from all imperfections, in which state it showeth wonderful works: for it helpeth the young to last in body, state, strength, and beauty, if they use but a little of it, because it suffereth in no way melancholy to exceed nor choler to burn. Also this oil doth open the nerves and veins, and if any member be fading it restoreth it to its due measure; and whatsoever be corrupt or superfluous in any member it dissolveth it speedily and separateth it; whereas if any thing be diminished it restoreth it. But in the fourth essence it appeareth in a fiery essence not fully cured from all diseases containing water, and not fully dried, in the which shape it produceth many virtues. The old it maketh young: and if in the hour of death so much as the weight of one grain, tempered with

wine, be given, so that it goeth into the throat, it reviveth, and entereth, and warmeth, and pierceth even to the heart, and suddenly annihilateth all superfluous humours, and expelleth poison and vivifyeth the nature of heat unto the liver; and if the old use it, and join thereto the water of gold, it removeth the infirmity of age, so that they may enjoy young hearts and bodies, and for this it is called the elixir of life. In the fifth and last essence it appeareth in a body equally glorified, wanting all faults, shining like the sun and the moon, in which shape it hath all the virtues which it possessed in the other essences, but fairer and more wonderful for (its) natural works are esteemed the miracles of God, since, if it be put to the roots, bodies of trees long dead and dried are made living, flourishing, and fruitful, and if the light of a lamp be fed with the self same spirit it is not extinguished, but is burning eternally without diminishing; and it maketh the precious stones of crystals most costly with divers colours, so that they which come naturally from the mine are not better; and it doth many other things also which may not be revealed to the unjust, which are esteemed impossible unto men, because it cureth all bodies, both quick and dead, without any other medicine."[1]

And that eloquent and amiable visionary, Elias Ashmole,[2] says:—

"St. Dunstan calls it the food of angels, and by others it is called the heavenly viaticum, the tree of life, and is undoubtedly (next unto God) the true

[1] Revelation of the Secret Spirit, pp. 6—9. London, 1623.
[2] Prolegomena to the Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum, p. 8.

alchochodon, or giver of years; for by it man's body is preserved from corruption, being enabled to live a long time without food. Nay, it is made a question whether any man can die that useth it, which I do not so much admire as to think why the possessors of it should desire to live that have those manifestations of glory, and eternity presented unto their fleshly eyes, but rather desire to be dissolved, and to enjoy the full fruition; than live where they must be content with the bare speculation."

As to the composition of this wonderful medicine there are, of course, many contradictory accounts. Boyle ascribed very great virtue to a highly rectified spirit obtained from human blood, and mentions several cases in which he used it with astonishing success. One of them[1] was that of a young lady, all whose family were consumptive, and in whom some dangerous symptoms had already appeared; she was distressed with a continual cough, and so much wasted both in flesh and strength, that it was scarcely thought she could survive the winter. It was in contemplation to remove her to the South of France, as soon as the spring came; and in the meantime application was made to Mr. Boyle to do something for her benefit. He sent some of this spirit, to which he gave another name. Its effects were so remarkably beneficial that she began to amend immediately, and was enabled to cross the sea in the early part of the spring without danger, and returned in the autumn with her health completely re-established. This story rests on too

[1] Hist. Sang. Hum. tit. xvi.

strong authority to be doubted, but when we recollect that Boyle was a man of deservedly high reputation, that he was suspected of having more than a tincture of the occult philosophy, and that, although not a physician, a pressing request was made for his advice; we shall be able to account for the cure on principles already explained. He gives, in the same section, an account of another cure, which may be explained in the same manner. A physician had a patient, whose complaint not only baffled his skill but that of the principal of the faculty. He was subject to fits of headache, so long, so frequent, and so violent, that he was obliged to give up all occupation, and considered his case desperate. By using the remedy which Mr. Boyle sent him (the same mentioned in the last instance) he entirely recovered his health, and having been accustomed, every two or three months, to be bled, the next time the operator opened a vein, he expressed his surprise at the florid, arterial, appearance of the blood. Another remedy which he speaks of as having been employed with success was what has been denominated the "primum ens" of balm. The mode of its preparation is as follows:—in the proper season of the year, when the herb is at its full growth, and its juices in their vigor, beat a quantity of the plant in a mortar till it is reduced to a glutinous paste; put this in a bolt-head hermetically sealed, and place it in a gentle heat for forty days, and by this time it will have deposited a sediment, and the remainder will be thinner, clearer, and more odoriferous. Extract the fixed salt from the sediment, and

mix it with melted sea-salt. Then mix equal parts of both liquors; and, having hermetically sealed them, expose them to the sun in the hottest season for six weeks. At the end of that period, a bright green oil will be seen floating on the top, which is the "primum ens" of the balm. This preparation Mr. Boyle mentions in his works, and states on the authority of Dr. Lefevre, that a gentleman having made some himself, took a few drops daily in a glass of wine. His nails came off, and he, unknowing how it might continue its operation, desisted from taking it any longer; he gave some of the same medicated wine to an old female servant, upon whom it had the effects he expected; but she was so terrified at some of its effects that she refused to be made young again. Now these two same remedies produced the same effect, because, say the alchemists, they contained a large portion of the true medicine, without being either of them the medicine itself: just as opium and hemlock produce similar effects, because they contain a portion of the same vegetable alkalies. In the "Revelation of the Secret Spirit" before quoted, is a recipe, which, as it, occupies eight pages, will be too long for quotation; it seems to indicate that alcohol is the water of life, and commences thus:—

"Make burning water very well rectified, but make it not of man's blood, for if it were of human blood it would lose its force, attractive of the virtues of herbs, by reason of its too much unctuousness, and would defile all the taste, and so be unfit to be received by man's nature. The simple water of

life is drawn out of wine, and is called the soul (spirit) whose glory is inestimable, is the mother and lady of all simple medicines, whose effects are wonderful."[1]

The writer then goes on to recommend certain tinctures to which he attributed various properties; taking away all diseases, and making old men young. The most singular speculation as to the universal medicine is that treated of by the celebrated Dr. Campbell, in his "Hermippus Redivivus:" a book of which, in spite of the extent of reading displayed in it, it is extremely difficult to say whether it were written in jest or earnest. There is so much acuteness, and so much quackery, that the reader's judgment is kept in a state of continual oscillation as to the author's own opinions. Dr. Campbell wrote largely "to order," and particularly on subjects connected with commerce and civilization, and his works were profitable as well as abundant. A story has been told that a gentleman, being one day in the doctor's company, said he had heard much of Dr. Campbell's writings, and would feel happy to transfer copies of them to his library shelves, if Dr. Campbell would desire his publisher to send them. The next day he was greatly surprised to see a small cart unloading at his door; and, on making inquiries, found it was Dr. Campbell's works![2]

[1] Revel. Sec. Sp. chap. vii.

[2] They amount to upwards of fifty volumes, about twenty of which are folio and ten quarto. Among them is a fictitious narrative entitled, "The Trials and Adventures of Edward Brown;" a book written with so much verisimilitude, that it has been repeatedly quoted as a true account. On him fell the greatest share of labour in compiling the Modern Universal History. Most of his works went through several editions, and certainly display much talent.

It is from this work, "Hermippus Redivivus," that several instances of longevity noticed in this chapter have been taken, two or three, however, required both additions and corrections.

The theory which Dr. C. advocates is no new one. It maintains first that all bodies are more or less throwing off a continual cloud of minute particles, and that as these particles are capable of penetrating the pores of the human body, they affect it beneficially or otherwise. Secondly, that there are effluvia, sensible and insensible, that have *positively* as well as *negatively* a beneficial effect on the human frame. For example, the air when in its greatest purity is the most wholesome, according to the general opinion, because it allows the functions of life to go on without interruption, and because it contains no noxious particles; medicine is good because it removes actual disease: food, because it keeps up the strength and enables the several organs of the body to continue a healthy action. The theory of which we treat says that the air in some places does more than allow the functions of the body to be properly carried on; that certain medicines not only remove disease but bestow health; that a particular diet not only keeps up the natural strength, but confers additional power. In short, it supposes that health consists in somewhat more than freedom from disease. Thirdly, that the universal medicine is exhibited only in this form of effluvia, though there may be many powerful medicines of other kinds which seem to approach its effects: and, fourthly, that the effluvia which constituted the elixir of life, were those insensibly transpiring

from the human body itself when in a state of perfect health, youth, and purity. To prove the first of these propositions, which, with some modifications, no one would think of denying, Dr. Campbell quotes Boerhaave's "Elementa Chemiæ."

"Hence we may understand that the various peculiar and often surprising virtues of plants may be widely diffused through the air, and carried to a vast distance by the winds, so that we must not presently account as fables what we find related in the history of plants concerning the surprising effects of effluvia.[1] The shade of the walnut gives the headache, and restrains the peristaltic motion; the effluvia of the poppy procure sleep; the vapour of the yew is reported mortal to those who sleep under it; and the smell of bean blossoms, long continued, disorders the senses. The strong action of the sun upon plants certainly raises an atmosphere of great efficacy by means of the spirit it diffuses, and the motions of the winds carry them to a great distance. The dark shades of thick woods, where vapours are contracted, occasion various diseases and often death to those who reside upon them, as appears by melancholy examples in America, which abounds in poisonous trees; for this spirit of plants is a thing peculiar to each species absolutely inimitable, not producible

[1] The Indians of North America believe that every object in nature communicates its peculiar properties to those bodies which come in contact with it. In order, therefore, to render their sons excellent warriors, they rear them on the hide of the panther, who in strength, cunning, agility, and acuteness of smell, excels most animals in the woods of America. In order to acquire the graces of modesty, their young females repose on the skins of the shy buffalo calf, or the timorous fawn. —Adair's *Hist. Amer. Ind.* p. 420.

by art. It (the balm) has, therefore, virtues peculiar to itself, but such as are strangely agreeable to human spirits."

And again quoting the same work:[1]—"The most subtle part of the juices of animals is a fine spirit, which is continually exhaling, wherein the proper character of the animal seems to reside, and whereby it is distinguished from all others. This we may infer from hounds which through a long tract of ground and a multitude of cross-roads will distinguish a particular animal out of a whole flock, the effluvia of whose footsteps they had lately scented, or will find out their masters through a hundred cross ways in the midst of a confused concourse of people."

The second point[2] is attempted to be proved by such circumstances as the following:—That persons who are in a declining state of health frequently recover by walking among mango-trees when the fruit is ripe; that the smell of fresh earth has been considered good in consumption; and that the island of Ternate, which was once very healthy, became exceedingly insalubrious when the Dutch East India Company ordered the king to cut down his clove-trees; instances which, if true, prove about as much for the philosopher's stone as for the theory they are brought forward to support. The two last propositions are supported by the opinion of Roger Bacon.[3]

"I have read many volumes of the wise. I find

[1] Vol. i. p. 151.

[2] It is not by a series of arguments, as here exhibited, that the author of Hermippus Redivivus makes out his case, but these arguments are introduced here and there, in a rambling way. Dr. Campbell's book is used here as a sort of text-book, because it is well-known.

[3] De Prolongatione Vitæ, c. xii.

few things in physic which restore the natural heat, weakened by the dissolution of the innate moisture or increase of a foreign one; but certain wise men have tacitly made mention of some medicines, which is likened to that which goeth out of the mine of the noble animal. They affirm that there is in it a force and virtue which restores and increases the natural heat.

"As to its disposition, they say it is like youth itself, and contains an equal and temperate complexion; and the signs of a temperate complexion in men are when their colors are made up of white and red, when their hair is yellow, inclining to redness, and curling. According to Pliny, when the flesh is moderate both in quality and quantity, when a man's dreams are delightful, his countenance cheerful and pleasant, and when in his appetite of eating and drinking he is moderate. This medicine, indeed, is like to such complexion, for it is of a moderate heat; its effluvia are temperate and sweet, and grateful to the soul; when it departs from this temperature it departs so far from its virtue and goodness. This medicine, therefore, doth temperately heat, because it is temperately hot; it therefore heals because it is whole: when it is sick, it makes a man sick; when it is distempered, it breeds distempers, and changeth the body to its own disposition, because of the similitude it hath with the body. For the infirmity of a brute animal rarely passeth into man, but into another animal of the same kind; but the infirmity of man passeth into man, and so doth health, because of likeness. Know, most gracious prince, that in

this there is a great secret; for Galen saith, that whatsoever is dissolved from anything, it must of necessity be assimilated to that thing as is manifest in diseases passing from one to another; such as weakness of the eyes, and pestilential diseases. This thing hath an admirable property, for it doth not only render human bodies safe from corruption, but it defends also the bodies of plants from putrefaction.

"This thing is seldom found; and, although it sometimes be found, it cannot be commodiously had of all men; and, instead of it, the wise do use that medicine which is in the bowels of the earth complete and prepared, and that which swims in the sea, and that which is in the square stone of the noble animal, so that every part may be free from the infection of another; but if that stone cannot be acquired, let other elements, separated, divided, and purified, be used. Now when this thing is like to youth that is of a temperate complexion, it hath good operations. If its temperature be better, it produceth better effects; sometimes it is even in the highest degree of its perfection, and then there is that property whereof we have spoken before. This differs from other medicines and nutriments, which heat and moisten after a temperate manner, and are good for old men. For other medicines principally heat and moisten the body, and secondarily they strengthen the native heat; but this doth principally strengthen the native heat, and after that refreshes the body, by moistening and heating it. For it brings this heat in old men, who have it but weakly and deficient, to a certain stronger and more vehement power. If a plaster be

made hereof, and applied to the stomach, it will help very much, for it will refresh the stomach itself, and excite an appetite. It will very highly recreate an old man, and change him to a kind of youth; and will make constitutions by what means soever depraved and corrupt, better. Many wise men have spoken but little of this thing; they have indeed laid down another thing like it, as Galen, in his fifth book of simple medicines; and Johannes Damascenus, in his aphorisms. But it is to be observed that Venus doth weaken and demolish the power and virtue of this thing; and it is very likely that the son of the prince, in his second canon of simple medicines, spoke of the thing where he saith, 'That there is a certain medicine concealed by wise men, lest the incontinent should offend their Creator. There is such a heat in this thing, as in young men of a sound constitution; and if I durst declare the properties of this heat, this most hidden secret should presently be revealed, for this heat doth help the palsied, it restores and preserves the wasted strength of the native heat, causeth it to flourish in all the members, and gently revives the aged.' "

These words of Roger Bacon form, it is evident, a commentary, enigmatical indeed, but not very difficult to be deciphered upon 1 Kings i. 1—4,—"Now King David was old and stricken in years, and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat. Wherefore his servants said unto him, Let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin: and let her stand before the king, and let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy bosom, that my lord

the king may get heat. So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag, a Shunammite, and brought her to the king. And the damsel was very fair, and ministered to him; but the king knew her not." It will be needless to point out the real or supposed coincidences; the quotation from Bacon is known better than any other part of his works; and the same opinion here expressed was held by Munster, Grotius, and of late by Dr. Adam Clarke; who, in the notes to the passage above quoted, introduces the same remarks of Roger Bacon. The history of the medicine, if such it may be called, is brief: it consists of instances of persons who, by being continually in the company of the young and healthy, have attained a great age, and till the last retained the full use of their mental and bodily powers, Cornaro himself an instance. The title of Campbell's book is derived from an inscription preserved by Remesius, in his Supplement to Gruter, which runs thus:—

> "Æsculapio et Sanitati [1]
> L. Clodius Hermippus
> Qui vixit annos cxlv dies v.
> Puellarum habitu refocillatus
> Et educatus."

Of this he gives several readings; one of which states that the person named Hermippus, or Hispanus, lived one hundred and forty-five years and

[1] This inscription is to be found in Reinesius, Syntagma Inscrip. Omiss. Gruter—e Schedis Langerm I. C.—p. 156. Ins. 118. Classis Prima;—and the following is the commentary:—"Jocularia est et indigna cujusquam curâ sapitque seculum semibarbarum.

five days, and another has "puerorum" instead of "puellarum," and one adds:—

> "Quod etiam post mortem ejus
> Non parum mirantur physici;
> Jam posteri sic vitam ducite."

"Now," says the doctor, "whether this were a real fact which actually happened, or whether it be the invention of some malicious wit, in order to exercise the talents of posterity, I concern not myself. It appears to me in the light of a physical problem, which may be expressed in a very few words,—viz., whether the breath of young women may probably contribute to the maintaining long life, and keeping off old age. This is what I propose to examine,—this is to be the subject of my discourse; in which, if what I deliver be entertaining and useful, the reader need not trouble himself much about the truth or falsehood of the inscription."

CHAPTER III.

HISTORICAL RECAPITULATION.

A few brief remarks on the progress and decline of those delusions, which, like the serpents of Hercules, were but too likely to strangle the infant Giants—Science and History — in their cradle, will appropriately conclude this work.

Without mentioning those who have patronised occult philosophy from political or interested views, it will be sufficient to give the names of Friar Bacon, Sir Christopher Heyden, Richelieu, Mazarin, Borrichius, and Ashmole, to rescue a pursuit, however fallacious, from the contempt of a less prejudiced and more enlightened age. Alchemy, Astrology, and Magic, to us appear as a dream: yet are they the dreams of philosophers, decorated with much that is grand and gorgeous, filled with the imaginings of the highest poetry, and bearing the impress of those splendid minds that shadowed forth such wild, yet such mighty phantasms. They have yet stronger claims on our attention than their beauty: though false themselves, they have materially aided the progress of true science. Had it not been for Alchemy —for the ideal wealth which a pretended science held out as a bait for investigation, Chemistry — that glorious search into the nature of the works of God

— would not this day have stood on so proud an eminence; and even the sublime, the independent Astronomy, is the sister, and, we must be allowed to say, the younger sister, of the delusive judicial Astrology.

These sciences flourished in great splendour in the earlier ages of the world, and as to their real origin, are wrapped in great darkness. There are, however, two conjectures, which have been already noticed in these volumes, and which are here recapitulated by way of conclusion. The one, which reckons among its adherents many of the fathers of the Church, and many of the learned among the laity, in all ages, is, that at a very early period there existed persons who, either by a profundity of research, and a depth of science unknown, even in this age of light and inquiry, or by actual compact with unholy spirits, had acquired supernatural power; that they could suspend at their pleasure the otherwise immutable laws of nature, and had discovered, by some means or other, a science by which the elements, and the very spirits supposed to inhabit and govern them, were subjected to the will of mortals. This explanation is easy and natural: it accounts for many difficulties in sacred and profane history, and requires but a little exertion of faith for its reception.

It is not, however, the most philosophical mode of elucidating a mysterious subject, as we have previously remarked, and is attended with this serious objection, that if any man, by a long course of study, or by revelation from infernal power, had the ability to produce effects so astonishing, miracles so decided,

how is it possible for us to discriminate between these and those mighty works performed by inspired seers, under the immediate influence of God's Holy Spirit? Would the Supreme Being have used miracles, through the ageney of his ministers, to convinec a rebellious and incredulous nation of his Divine nature, when man, by Satanie aid, could perform them without him? It would be a vain answer to say that Satan would not perform miracles for man's benefit: for, allowing the former supposition to be correet, sinee "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," might not he, for example, have used ineantations to obtain sovereign power over the ehildren of Israel; and it will be plain that arguments of the same nature may be used in other cases.

We pass to the seeond, whieh attributes these extraordinary effeets to ingenious and ably coneealed imposture, operating upon ignoranee and gross superstition. We are frequently led to under-rate the knowledge and the attainments of the antediluvians, looking at the mere remoteness of the period in whieh they lived, and the extreme darkness of mueh of that time which has intervened. We eontemplate modern science, modern discoveries, and we are struck with admiration: we see a Newton uplifting, as it were, the veil of Nature, and opening to our astonished gaze the glories of far-off systems, earrying the line and the plummet in the heavens, and investigating those laws by which these mighty bodies are governed! We see all this, and we are speechless with wonder! Again, we examine the science by means

of which Newton, Herschel, Airy, and others, have made such Astronomical discoveries. We turn to mathematical works, and ascertain that this science was first invented long after the Flood, and that many important branches of it are of comparatively modern date. We view with pleasure the beautiful and interesting facts continually disclosed by that most delightful of sciences—Chemistry; and we know that our grandfathers knew scarcely anything connected therewith correctly.

Seeing, then, that these and many other sciences almost equally interesting, are of so recent discovery, we are inclined to say, what could be the knowledge of the antediluvians? Forgetting that with Adam, God himself talked face to face; Adam, therefore, could have been ignorant of none of these things, proceeding, as he did, pure and perfect from the hands of his Creator. He was endowed with a full understanding of the works of that Creator, and this that he might fully adore the beneficent Being by whose providence he was created. If any proof should be required of a fact which seems so evident, we need but remember, that after God had created all living things, he brought them to Adam to see what he would call them, and whatsoever Adam called each, that was the name thereof.

Now this argues in him an intimate knowledge of their nature and properties; for they had no names before, nor were there any words which were merely sounds, for language was yet in its first state—simple and pure. (The term simple is used in opposition to complex, and pure in opposition to derived.) When

from his primitive purity Adam fell by the temptation of Satan, we cannot suppose that he lost all that knowledge, which, in his pristine glory, he possessed; much no doubt vanished, but it is not unreasonable to believe, that that which remained far transcended the science of any of his descendants. Acting according to this opinion, the Alchemists pretend that Adam was the first adept—that is, the first possessor of the philosopher's stone. But though he may be supposed so accomplished as even to render this opinion excusable, we must clearly perceive, that for want of means to diffuse and to perpetuate learning, but a few of his descendants, comparatively speaking, could attain eminence in science, and the great bulk of the world were necessitated to confine their attention to the mechanical arts. After the flood the same must have been the case to a greater extent: knowledge must have been still more circumscribed and still more imperfect.

We have already mentioned the manner in which idolatry overspread the earth. We have spoken of the perverted doctrine of angels, and shown in what way originated a belief in witchcraft. It is but to refer to that subject, and we see at once that a person possessed of attainments beyond those of the majority, would be suspected of having obtained such attainments by more than human aid. In times of idolatry such suspicion would neither be dangerous to the person, nor prejudicial to the character of the individual thus distinguished; and hence we find many among the ancients openly boasting of their communications with the invisible world. Socrates may not

be brought as a fair instance, but Numa Pompilius is a case in point. In short, tradition had preserved the memory of many wonderful events, of many apparently almost miraculous works which had been performed by the skill of men. A long train of causes had induced a belief in occult agency, and of spiritual assistanee. Great ignorance prevailed among the mass of mankind: and, therefore, those effects of which the causes were hidden, sometimes designedly, and with great care, were naturally attributed to celestial or infernal influence.

We must be careful, before entering on the history of a subject like the present, to acquire a correct idea of the matter itself. Magic, of which alchemy is but a branch, may be viewed in two ways. We may glance at it as the profoundly learned have done, and consider it as the knowledge of the laws of nature, and of the means of applying that knowledge to our purposes. This has been called Natural Magie. Again, we may view it as something undefined, yet fearful and sublime, as a scienee, which gives its successful votary power over the spirits which inhabit space, and over the atoms of which matter is eomposed. This is the sole Magie which popular superstition acknowledges, and has been named Geotic Magic. But when we speak of Natural Magic, we do not necessarily speak of the science which teaches the true laws of Nature, and their right application to the wonderful and the vast; for under the same appellation is comprised a science, false in its principles, and therefore equally false in its results—false, not because the work of imposture, but because grounded

upon undemonstrated, and consequently undigested premises. Natural Magic, as treated of by the writers upon Occult Philosophy, is the imagination of intellects of the very first order. It is an attempt, though an unsuccessful one, to analyze the universe; and though the superstructure which they raised has fallen for want of foundation, we cannot refuse our tribute of wonder and admiration at the sublime character of the ruins.

"Judicial Astrology is the key to Natural Magic," says Elias Ashmole, "and Natural Magic the door that leads to this blessed stone, viz., the philosopher's. Howbeit, the ignorance and malice of some times, and the common custom of ours, has falsely and abusively called Necromancy, and what arts are raised from the doctrine of devils—Magic, without affording that just and due distinction which ought to be made between them; and what greater injury to learning than to confound laudable knowledge with that which is impious and devilish: for if there be anything in that which we call Magic, other than a searching into those hidden virtues which it hath pleased God to bestow upon created things, though closely locked up by the curse, whereby we aptly apply agents to patients—I say that if there be anything else, they are but subtle falsehoods that shelter themselves under that title."

Paracelsus, in his work "De Occultâ Philosophiâ," speaks similarly; and the noted Cornelius Agrippa, in his book bearing the same title, says, in chap. ii. book I, "Magic contains the most profound contemplation of the most secret things, together with the

nature, power, quality, substance, and virtue thereof, and also the knowledge of all nature." But we must not be deceived by such terms as these. Paracelsus did not mean what we call Natural Philosophy; nor did Cornelius Agrippa, nor Mirandola, who all wrote on this subject, and described it in the same, or nearly the same terms; but a very undefined and mysterious kind of knowledge, how to attain which they tell us not, or if they pretend to tell, they deliver their responses in so oracular a manner as to baffle all but those who are equally learned with themselves.

Of all sciences founded in error, none have been so perseveringly cultivated as that of Astrology; and it is a singular fact, that in those ages when a belief in it most prevailed, the most devoted to this delusion were the most illustrious for their learning and talents; and for several causes, the study thereof was connected with that of medicine. Few things more contributed to retard the progress of medical science than the absurd union which made Astrology almost an essential part of a physician's education. In this case, however, as in every other, the door was open to imposture and ignorance. Pretenders to astrological science crowded the ranks of the medical profession, till the cheat became apparent to the world—the uselessness of Astrology to the faculty. The chain was broken, and the science of medicine set free to prosper.

To enter into any disquisition as to the truth of a science universally exploded, would be useless; and to those who are curious in such research, we would recommend a perusal of the works of Sir

Christopher Heydon, in answer to Chambers. It will be more useful to ascertain what the most learned among the ancient professors believed concerning its office; and to this purpose we shall quote the definition of Ptolemy, whose writings, referable to the reign of Hadrian, have at least the authority of antiquity.

"Astrology (says this celebrated philosopher) teaches, by the motions, the configurations, and influences of the signs, stars, and celestial planets, to prognosticate of the natural effects and mutations to come in their elements, and their inferior and elementary bodies." This seems to signify nearly the same as astronomy; but Astrology was generally divided into Judicial and Natural—Natural Astrology being science which shows and explains the powers of the heavenly bodies, exerted, by means of attraction, on the air and water of our globe, which would now be considered partly astronomy, partly meteorology; and Judicial Astrology, which reveals, by the means of the astral positions, the destinies of individuals, of cities, and of empires.

Man, saith the inspired penman, has sought out many inventions; and we have just glanced at times when the light of revelation illumined but a small portion of the human race. In a moral and in a religious point of a view, it is interesting, though melancholy, to look back to that time, to see the veil of superstitious ignorance drawing deeper and deeper, and enclosing still more of the family of Adam in its gloomy circuit. It is interesting, though awful, to note the progress of idolatry, and the flood of vice

and wickedness, which came in and overwhelmed the benighted world; and in so doing we shall notice the gradual change which took place in the nature of the ideas of men concerning religion, and objects of religious worship. The first step appears to have been to regard the sun, the moon, and the stars as deities; and this among men whose gradual declension in the knowledge of the truth had at length brought them into complete ignorance, seems at once natural and poetical. The Chaldaic shepherd, watching by night on his mountains, and beholding above him the clear and cloudless sky of Asia, studded with a thousand suns, may almost be excused if he bowed the knee before these most glorious of the Creator's works. In the darkness of that age it is something to have selected such sublime representatives of the Divinity: and we have good reason to believe that there existed ever in the minds of the well-disposed and the contemplative, a conviction of the unity of the great Supreme. Such men *did* consider these beautiful worlds as His ministers—as high spirits of power and benignity, and as mediators between the awful and inaccessible Deity and his frail and perishing creatures.

We may, without forcing our minds into the improbable, imagine we behold the hoary Chaldæan stretching forth his hands to the constellations, and praying, in the words of a poet of the first order—

> "Look down upon us from your spheres of light,
> Bright ministers of the Invisible!
> Before whose dread supremacy weak man
> Dare not appear. For what are we—earth worms—
> That the All-Holy One to us should stoop

From the pure sanctuary where he dwells,
Throned in eternal light? But ye his face
Behold, and in His presence stand, and His commands obey,
Who in your burning chariots' path the heavens
In ceaseless round—Saturn and mighty Sol—
Though absent now beyond the ends of earth,
Yet hearing human prayer, great Jupiter,
Venus, and Mars, and Mercury—oh! hear,
Interpreters divine, and for your priest
Draw the dread veil that shades the days to come!"

ATHERSTON.

In Assyria seems to have first sprung to light this imposing fiction regarding the heavenly bodies; viewing them as divine, and acting by volition, as some did, or being under the government of spirits who exerted powerful influence over our planet, as was the more general opinion, it is not to be wondered at that their motions were studied with the most intense anxiety; and not less so, because the spirits who ruled the stars were not unfrequently supposed to pass into our globe, there to spend much time, and accomplish mighty works. The cultivators of Astrology, however, tell us a different tale; like the Alchemists and the Magicians, they will be satisfied with no less antiquity than Adam—no meaner a birth-place than the garden of Eden. Adam, say they, received a knowledge of it from the lips of his Maker; and knowing thereby that the earth would be twice destroyed—once by fire, and once by water—felt a desire to communicate to his descendants the knowledge thus acquired. He engraved characters, therefore, declaratory thereof, on two pillars — one of brick, which perished in the deluge; and one of stone, which, as Josephus tells us, was existing in his days. Seth, Enos, Cain, Noah, and Nimrod

are all said to have successfully prosecuted this science; and there are not wanting those who tells us that the prophecy of Enoch, the seventh from Adam, treated of this art and of Alchemy. Abraham, continue they, took it into Egypt, the Egyptians communicated it to the Greeks, and they to the Latins.

On the other hand, among the descendants of Abraham, Solomon was distinguished for this, for Alchemy, and for Magic. He had a seal, whereby he commanded the genii of the earth; and he understood perfectly the nature of the heavenly bodies. The Queen of the South, of that country which we now call Abyssinia, came to his court to hear his wisdom. From him she acquired such science as unveiled the future, and imparted power to the present; and on her return gave to her subjects a long line of princes, inheriting the wisdom and the magical skill, as well as the blood of Solomon. The Æthiopians thus obtained an insight into an art that seems to have been much to their taste, for certain it is that astrology has greatly flourished in Africa; and Asiatic tales give great reason to believe African magicians and astrologers both more powerful and more malevolent than those of other nations. Of the Greek adepts we know little or nothing till the time of the Ptolemies in Egypt, when, as in a congenial soil, it again took root, and bore plentiful fruit. From a MS. by Fotngrasse, "Sur l'Astrologie Judiciaire," we extract the following anecdote, which, however, it is but due to say, is not found confirmed by any ancient author. Ptolemy Philadelphus was about to build a place to lodge the books which he had col-

lected as an addition to the library acquired by his father. He summoned the chief architects to his palace to consult about the projected edifice. A philosopher named Alexander waited on the king, and entreated him, as he wished for permanency to the glorious library in which he took so just a delight, to defer the decision of the plan for a day, adding that Mars was lord of the ascendant, and other astral configurations boded ill to the work, and that if that day fixed its date, no watchfulness could save it from the flames. Ptolemy, though by no means incredulous as to the science, refused his belief to this particular denunciation, assigning as a reason for not complying with the wishes of Alexander, that he was about to leave Alexandria the next day for some months, and he did not wish such delay to take place in the erection of the library. The work accordingly went forward, and its ultimate fate has been the lamentation of the civilized world for some centuries.

Cæsar, it appears, burned a part by accident, when, to save himself, he set on fire his fleet; but after this Cleopatra greatly enriched and enlarged it.

To this story we cannot give credence—first, because it is not confirmed by any great authority among the ancients; and next, because it is hardly likely to have been recorded at all by them. The fulfilment of the prophecy belongs to much later times; and it is comparatively rare that *unfulfilled* predictions are handed down to posterity, more especially when unregarded in their own age. We shall not, we think, be accused of presumption if we refer this story to some astrologer of the middle ages. From

Egypt the transition to Rome is natural and easy. The intercourse that prevailed between the countries in consequence of the oft-renewed league with the Ptolemies, occasioned much admixture of Egyptian superstition with that indigenous to Rome, and that which had been derived from Greece.

Here, then, we place the era at which Astrology became popular among the Romans. In the previous time it had been known rather than pursued, nor did it receive any check till Augustus himself, one of the most superstitious of men, banished all astrologers from Rome, afraid probably to hear predictions in the accomplishment of which his own fate was involved. In spite of this edict there is every reason to consider the emperor a firm believer in the truth of Astrology; and we have the authority of Tacitus for the skill, as well as the credence, of Tiberius. We extract the passage entire, as well as the remarks of the historian upon it; remarks worthy so cautious, yet so splendid a genius.

" Nor would I (says that great man) omit the passage of Tiberius, concerning Sergius Galba, then consul, whom having sent for, and tried by many modes of discourse, he thus addressed him, in Greek—' And thou, Galba, shalt at some time taste of empire;' signifying, by his knowledge of the Chaldaic art, his late and brief power. To obtain this art he had leisure at Rhodes and Thrasyllus for an instructor, whose skill he in this manner proved. When he consulted on any such matter he used a lofty part of the house, and admitted to his confidence but one freed man. He, gifted with a strong person, but

ignorant of literature, over rugged and pathless waves, preceded him whose art Tiberius had determined to try—for the house hung over cliffs; and had there been any suspicion of fraud or folly, would have precipitated him, when returning, into the sea beneath, lest there should remain any idea of the secret. Thrasyllus, therefore, being conducted over these rocks, after he had conversed with him who questioned him, predicting to him the empire, and learnedly made known the future, was asked if he knew the hour appointed to himself, what year, what day would be fatal to him? He having considered the positions and distances of the stars, first paused, then grew fearful; and the more he inspected the more he trembled with amazement and dread. At length he exclaimed that a doubtful and almost fatal crisis was impending over him. Then Tiberius, embracing him, congratulated him as one provident of danger, and who would be safe from it; and receiving whatsoever he said as an oracle, considered him as the most intimate of his friends. But while listening to these and similar relations, my mind is in doubt whether the affairs of mortals are determined by chance, or by fate and an immutable necessity; because you will find of different sentiments the wisest of the ancients, and those who follow their sects. And many are firmly persuaded that neither the beginnings of our lives, nor our ends, nor men themselves, are matters of care to the gods; therefore often misfortunes fall upon the good, and prosperity becomes the lot of the wicked. Others, on the other hand, allow that some connection exists

among affairs, but not from wandering stars, but from the principles and bands of natural causes; and yet they allow us an election of life, which, when you have chosen, the result is certain. Neither are those things good or bad which the vulgar so repute. Many who seem wounded with adversity are yet happy, numbers that wallow in wealth are yet most wretched; since the first often bear with magnanimity the blows of fortune, and the latter abuse her bounty in baneful pursuits. For the rest, it is common to multitudes of men, to have each their whole future fortunes determined from the moment of their birth; or if some event thwart the prediction, it is through the mistake of such as pronounce at random, and thence debase the credit of an art, which, both in ages past and our own, hath given signal instances of its certainty. And to avoid lengthening this digression, I shall remember in its order, how by the son of this same Thrasullus the empire was predicted to Nero."[1]

Tacitus, notwithstanding these moral quotations, for such they are, was not himself without faith in the science, which he believed to have furnished such astounding proofs of its truth; at least we may suppose so, for he immediately quotes another author, in these words; "but some things have fallen out otherwise than predicted, through the fallacy of those speaking things with which they were unacquainted, and thus was diminished the credit of an art, to which both the past age and our own have borne clear testimony." It is worthy of notice, that Tacitus

[1] The Annals of Tacitus translated by Gordon, book vi.

has, with much tact, kept back his own opinions, using the words of others. But before we trace any further the history of astrology, it may be worth while to examine this story, as it has been much referred to as a proof of the science.

It will be fresh in the remembrance of every reader, that when Louis XI. determined to put to death the celebrated Martius Galeotti, he tried him with a question similar to that employed by Tiberius. Galeotti knew, without aid from the stars, that danger hung over him; and he likewise well knew the character of the monarch, dark and determined as it was, to have its weak points. To these, with wonderful dexterity, he applied his answer, and succeeded in saving his own life. From a Prince like Tiberius Cæsar — suspicious, penetrating, unhesitating, cruel and relentless, yet possessing talents of the most surpassing order—we expect that his counsellors would be themselves men of acute and cultivated intellect. Thrasyllus must have been intimately acquainted with the fierce and distrustful disposition of his master; and the well-known dissimulation of Tiberius, could hardly be supposed to suffice, in order to prevent a man, so evidently alert in mind as Thrasyllus, from reading more of the tyrant's purpose and feelings than Tiberius either intended or supposed. The question itself—the importance of their previous conversation—the place in which they were—the way they arrived at it—the person who attended them, and whose presence, when Tiberius was himself present, may be seen to have been totally useless; all these circumstances put together, and compared by a

mind like that of the astrologer, formed a more interesting subject for contemplation than any stellar configuration. To see danger was the first point, to express it was politic; for should no harm be intended, it would have been impossible to contradict him. And had he professed safety, Tiberius would more than possibly have considered himself justified in hurling the unfortunate astrologer into the sea, in order to prove his declaration; and indeed some facts are related of this imperial dæmon, which render such a supposition in the highest degree probable. We may then be warranted to refuse our assent to the supernatural part of this story, and consequently to astrology, as far as supported by it.

But to proceed, Tiberius was not the only Roman emperor who placed implicit faith in the art. It continued to increase both in professors and patronage. Manilius, in the reign of Augustus, had rendered it the subject of melodious and majestic verse; and imperial favour had now rendered it fashionable. Horace speaks of it as a thing constantly practised, and dissuades his friends from its use, evidently in rather a serious mood. If this was the case when Augustus reigned, we may conceive how greatly must it have been followed when the edict against it no longer existed. The son of Thrasyllus, before mentioned, succeeded to the skill and science of his father; and of him Tacitus says, that "he foretold the empire to Nero." No very difficult task, one would think, considering the characters of Claudius, of Agrippina, of Brittanicus, and of Nero himself. We likewise find that Agrippina was warned that

Nero's exaltation would in the end be fatal to her, and that she would fall by the hand of her son. "Let him kill me (was the reply of the extraordinary woman), provided he does but reign."

When, by her crime, the imbecile and contemptible emperor had ceased to exist, she delayed publishing his death, and claiming the empire for her son. The promise of the empire to Nero was fulfilled by the murder of Claudius by his detestable wife, until the astrologers, the Chaldeans (as Tacitus calls them), had intimated the auspicious moment. The calm was not long for Astrology. Nero, and, after him, Vitellius and Domitian, revived the edict of Augustus; but the very fact that it was so often revived, proves the prevalence and the popularity of the science. Vespasian himself appears to have been an adept, and is said to have foretold the death of Domitian by assassination. Other astrologers agreed and specified, as Suetonius tells us, the year, the day, and even the hour, that the event should take place.

That such a prediction as this should give Domitian a distaste of astral prophecy is no wonder; and hence, though trembling in belief, he was a severe and unceasing persecutor of those who professed skill in it. On the day previous to his death, alluding to the entrance of the moon into Aquarius —"Aquarius!" said he, "he shall be no longer a watery, but a bloody sign; for a deed shall to-morrow be done which shall call the attention of the world." Eleven o'clock was the fatal hour, and he kept himself carefully secluded; but his attendants were in the plot, and they told him

that the hour was passed. He was thrown off his guard, admitted the conspirators, and fell by their hands. In this case it needed no information from above to tell that a prince, whose only study was how he should surpass Nero, or even Tiberius, in cruelty and debauchery, would fall a victim to the vengeance of an injured empire. The conspirators, in all probability, chose that time because they believed success to be fated to them; and the monster himself, being deceived, was less guarded than usual. Passing over the reigns of Neiva (to whom, however, the empire is said to have been promised by an astrologer), and that of Trajan, who was too much occupied with wars, and rumours of wars, to have much time to spare for stars, and predictions drawn therefrom, we come to the most brilliant era of this pretended science. Ptolemy, equally celebrated as an astronomer and a mathematician, was likewise the greatest of astrologers. In his *μεγάλη συντάξις* he has given a digest of the science, written with much order, and as luminously as the subject allowed.

The reigning emperor, now a persecutor, and now an encourager of astrology, was at all times a steady believer, kept a diary according to astral directions, and is said to have predicted his own death with great accuracy. Indeed there are few characters in history more thoroughly incomprehensible than that of Hadrian—so highly gifted as to be, perhaps, the first man of his extensive empire, and so wise as to be ranked among the best of princes, his private conduct was harsh, cruel, and

awfully depraved. There were few sciences known in that day in which he was not profoundly skilled, but those called "occult" were his favourite pursuits; and dark indeed is the complexion of some of the legends connected with his researches. Of his many works none have descended to our time, and Ptolemy stands alone in an art in which he was successfully rivalled by his imperial contemporary. During the reign of Antoninus, astrology still flourished under the same auspices; and but little later, we find Censorinus writing his treatise "de Die Natali;" a tract which Vossius enthusiastically calls a "golden book," and which really deserves praise for much valuable, though extraneous information, particularly on chronology. After Censorinus, no writers of great eminence are extant on this art till the eighth century. The Venerable Bede and Alcuin, scarcely less celebrated, pursued this vain science to some extent. But in the next century it is said to have broken forth with great lustre in Arabia; and in the year 827, under the patronage of Al Maimam, the Mirammolim, the *μεγάλη συντάξις* was translated, under the title of "Almagest," by Al Hayen Ben Yusseph. To this Al Bumasar added an appendix, and, within a few years wrote Al Freganus, Ebn Nozophim, Al Farag, and Geber.

It is necessary to say that there are doubts as to the genuineness of those works attributed to the last named author. When the Moors of Africa passed into Spain they introduced all the false as well as all the true learning which distinguished that extraordinary people. In a fertile and beautiful country,

under wise and accomplished monarchs, and enjoying success in war and internal tranquillity, the Spanish Moors made rapid advances in science, in military tactics, in architecture, poetry, and manufactures; nor were more visionary pursuits abandoned. Magic, Astrology, and Alchemy found numerous and learned defenders, and when the tide of fortune turned against them—when Boabdil, the last and unfortunate king of Granada, had fled before Ferdinand and Isabella, the Christian Spaniards pursued, though with scarcely so much success, the arts which the more versatile Moors had taught them. Before the expulsion of that people we find a king of Castile, Alphonso the Wise, acquiring fame by scientific research, and sending for Christian and Jewish doctors from every part of Europe to arrange the astronomical tables known by his name. In arranging and correcting the observations of Ptolemy he is said to have expended 400,000 ducats. But Astrology was not unregarded: and the king is said to have written with his own hand the two cabalistic volumes in cypher, yet remaining in the Royal Library at Madrid. Certain it is that, though much warned, and much exhorted by the prelates of his court, he distinguished, by his favour, the professors of astral science, and in his code of laws enrolled Astrology among the liberal sciences.

In Germany, many and eminent men have been addicted to this study; and a long catalogue might be made of those who have considered other sciences with reference to Astrology, and written on them as such. Faust has, of course, the credit of being an

astrologer as well as a wizard; but leaving this much bespattered personage, we find that singular but splendid genius Cornelius Agrippa, writing with as much zeal against Astrology as in behalf of other occult sciences. Common report tells some wild and extravagant tales of him—among many others the following. That a demon under his command, having torn in pieces a young man who meddled with forbidden knowledge, Agrippa ordered the spirit to animate the body of the youth, and to walk with him to the market-place, where he licensed the spirit to depart. The body of course fell again dead; but suspicion being excited by the marks of claws found on the neck, the magician was taken and burned, and his dog, also a familiar spirit, shared the same fate. The truth was, that he was a man far above his time, and though wild and visionary in his ideas, and probably inclined to gain credit for arts which he did not possess, he yet merits our respect by the assistance he really gave to science.

To the illustrious believers in Astrology who flourished in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, must be added the name of Albert von Wallenstein, duke of Friedland. He was, indeed, an enthusiast in the cause, and many curious anecdotes are related of this devotion. That he had himself studied Astrology, and under no mean instructors, is evidenced by his biography and correspondence, which has so lately appeared. His tutor, Paulus Virdingius, a friend and correspondent of Kepler, appears first to have given his mind a bias towards this study, which he afterwards prosecuted to some extent, at Padua

under Argoli. His celebrated antagonist was regarded by him in an astrological point of view, and he appears to have hoped that stars in their courses would fight against Gustavus Adolphus, as they did against Sisera. A letter is extant from Wallenstein concerning the nativity of that great prince, dated Gitskin, May 21, 1628.[1]

"I thank you for having sent me the notice of the King of Sweden's birth-day. Now I have further need to know the place of his birth, for it is necessary on account of the 'Elevatio poli.' I pray you to forward this as soon as may be. I should be further glad that you would cause the scheme to be erected by Dr. Herlicius, not that so much stress is to be laid on this, but it is my wish that various hands should be employed in this part. He need not give any conclusions, but only the figuration."

Kepler himself was employed by this extraordinary man in making astrological calculations, and was rewarded by the exertion of Wallenstein's influence with the court of Vienna, which procured the settlement of a large demand. Afterwards, when the enemies of Wallenstein had procured his dismissal from the employments which he held, and a deputation was sent to inform him of the fact, in what manner they might think least painful to his haughty and ambitious spirit, he who was well informed of the machinations carried on against him, and who knew the contemptible character of Ferdinand, received the messengers with courtesy, and before he allowed them to enter upon the subject of their mission, he produced

[1] Col. Mitchell, Life of Wallenstein, p. 338.

a horary scheme, by which he told them he knew the cause of their coming, and the nature of the message which they were to deliver, received with apparent indifference his dismissal, and made splendid presents to the two noblemen who announced it. In his subsequent retirement, while living as a magnificent prince among his feudal vassals, and occupied in every way for their welfare, while trade, agriculture, religious establishments, building, and manufactures occupied by turns his attention, his [1] favourite science was not forgotten; for we find one Senni, an Italian astrologer, among his attendants.

Niphus—whose medical works, though no longer valuable, show profound learning and a powerful and cultivated mind,—wrote in favour of Astrology. But to those who wish to learn who and what were the supporters of the art, we recommend the table affixed to Lilly's "Christian Astrology."

In England, after Bede and Alcuin, there is a considerable period before any eminent man made profession of astral science. Roger Bacon appears to have been led away by its fascination, and even suffered imprisonment on that account. And from this time, though extensively cultivated, it seems to have been pursued rather as an auxiliary to Alchemy than for its own sake. Yet many of our kings were the subjects of astrological predictions; and in the reign of Henry VIII. it was declared high-treason to foretel the approach of death to the king. Elizabeth and her court were deeply tinged with this superstition; and MSS. of that date are yet extant which

[1] Schiller, 30 jahrkr., b. 2, p. 994.

she is said to have consulted. At the same period, Catherine de Medici is noted as an adept: and her skill, as well as her assent to the truth of this science, is attested by a medal which bears an enormous price, and is occasionally to be met with in the cabinets of the curious.

Science was at a low ebb in France at that time. The splendour of Cellini had served to invest with a species of glory, the arts in which he is said to have taken delight; and the authority of his name was a sufficient excuse in a period like that of which we are speaking. Indeed crime then strode with a gigantic pace. Vice seems to have been universal in extent, as well as enormous in degree; and the cottage, as well as the palace, bore testimony to a corruption fearful and radical. Science possessed no charms for men in a time like this. To amass immense riches; to penetrate the veil of futurity; to command success in war and negotiation, were advantages thought worth acquiring at any price, while the degraded state of public religion offered a road to eternal happiness, even to the most abandoned, if their revenues could furnish the price of entrance. The general belief in satanic influence occasioned Magic and Necromancy to be eagerly seized, as most likely to further the desired results.

Astrology, from its high pretensions, obtained a large share of patronage, and alchemy was the business of many pretenders to learning, who were supported, while employed in their cabalistic operations, by the needy and disorderly nobles of the day. Even to those really imbued with better knowledge,

philosophy presented not sufficient attractions, and it required the zest of unlawfulness, or at least of mystery, to induce them to study, when science derived from causes open to every eye was everywhere disregarded. A gloomy picture of the then state of France is given by Davila, in his "Historia delle Guerre Civili di Francia."

But, to return to England. No sooner was James I. seated upon the throne than every species of occult philosophy received a new stimulus. The king himself wrote, as we have seen, on Demonology, and was fully persuaded of the truth of what he wrote. He, however, much as he encouraged searching into such matters, was very severe with all who practised them, and instituted a persecution of no slight character against such as, in his kingly wisdom, he judged wiser than they should be. In the time of his son and successor, Lilly made great noise; he read the mystic works of Cornelius Agrippa, and became, as he says, intimately acquainted with many spirits of power and authority. He first engaged in the study of Rhabdomancy, and, having failed therein, betook himself to Astrology. But it appears, though a long story is quoted from his life, written by himself, concerning his ill success at Westminster, that he considered Alchemy as the object to be obtained, and was afterwards induced by his success to confine himself to astral predictions. The story is worth quoting, as it proves that the Dean and Chapter of Westminster believed the powers of Lilly and the truth of Rhabdomancy. He says of himself, in his remarks prefixed to his "Christian Astrology,"—"After living

privately and obscurely, in 1632, I was strangely affected to Astrology, and became desirous to study it, only to see if there were any verity in it." He gives a bad account of his first tutor, a Welch clergyman, whose name was Evans, and whom he declares to have been "of all—the veriest knave." After six weeks he cast him off, and for some time studied alone. His associates were certainly men of the lowest order, and it is a matter of just surprise that the learned Ashmole should have mixed so familiarly with them as he did. The character of Lilly is thus given by an able critic. Speaking of the hard words used by Chambers, he says,—"Lilly, it is clear, deserved as much of these reproaches as will fairly attach to one who has been well described, as having, by dint of plain, persevering, consistent, unblushing roguery, acquired a decent reputation, convinced himself that he was honest, put money in his pocket, and in due time was comfortably buried under a nice black marble stone, inscribed with a record of deceased virtue in English and Latin. An attentive examination of his works will convince the reader that the above is just." In the "Christian Astrology," Lilly takes a high tone, and delivers his opinions as things uncontroverted and incontrovertible. He exhibits much desultory research and considerable tact, but no originality, though much boasting of his "new methods." There are no allusions to spiritual beings throughout the work, saving the names of the angels of the planets — a circumstance rather surprising, for Lilly believed their influence, and thought it lawful to converse with them, as we read in his

life; therefore the term, "Christian Astrology," did not preclude him from giving a full account of their powers and offices.

After the death of Lilly, his disciple, Coley, succeeded to his occupation, but not to his fame; and since the Restoration, the "science" has gradually, but steadily declined. Partridge composed almanacs in imitation of Lilly; and Francis Moore, physician, to this day maintains a strong hold on the respect of the English public. In Germany there is yet published an almanac, professing to be Thurmersen's, who died about one hundred and fifty years ago, and was a noted astrologer in his day, being first physician, printer, bookseller, and astrologer, at the Court of the Marquis of Brandenburg: his correspondence fills two quarto volumes, and is preserved in the library at Berlin. A similar almanac is published in Persia, and was at one time attempted in France; but Henry III., in 1577, issued an edict, prohibiting the publication of astrological predictions in almanacs. In our own day the professors of this art are few, yet Ebenezer Sibly has published two volumes, quarto, on medico-astrological science, and speaks mysteriously, if not profoundly also, of Alchemy: his reanimating solar tincture, and his lunar tincture, speak by their titles: his works speak for themselves, and need no comment.

It will hardly come under the design of the present paper to notice the prophetic almanacs and publications of that kind that from time to time appear, nor the productions of Mr. Smith, who, we believe, is the writer of the books signed "Raphael."

CHAPTER IV.

THE PROGRESS AND DECLINE OF ALCHEMY.

The votaries of Alchemy, like those of Astrology and Magic, claimed for their art an origin at once mystic and remote. "The cradle of Chemistry," says Olaus Borrichius, "is to be sought in the most distant times." And, accordingly, we shall feel no surprise at being told that the knowledge of this science was communicated to mankind by those angels who, according to the rabbinical traditions, were overcome by the charms of women, and bartered for the love of earthly beings their celestial inheritance. This idea was conveyed in various terms, as the minds of the writers on the subject were biassed by their previous reading. One tells us that these spirits were genii who had never been inhabitants of heaven; another, that they were fallen angels; a third, that they were the children of Seth, to whom this mystery was known by tradition. Zosimus,[1] the Panopolite, has a passage, quoted both by Borrichius and Dr. Thompson. "The holy Scriptures," says he, "inform us, oh lady! that there is a tribe of

[1] Φάσκουσιν αἱ ἱεραὶ γραφαὶ ἤτοι βίβλιοι, ὦ γύναι, ὅτι ἐστὶ τὸ δαιμόνιον γένος ὃ χρῆται γυναιξὶν. Ἐμνημόνευσε καὶ Ἑρμῆς ἐν τοῖς Φυσικοῖς· καὶ σχέδον ἅπας λόγος φανερὸς καὶ ἀποκρυφὸς τοῦτο ἐμνημόνευσεν, &c. &c. See Olaus Borrichius de ortu et progressu Chemiæ, p. 12. Mangetus, Bibliotheca Chemica Curiosa, p. 2. Dr. Thompson, History of Chemistry, vol. i. p. 5.

dæmons which converse with women. Hermes mentions this in his 'Physics;' and almost every writing, whether sacred or apocryphal, states the same thing. The ancient and sacred Scriptures inform us that the angels, captivated by women, taught them all the operations of Nature. Offence being taken at this, they remained out of heaven, because they had taught mankind all manner of evil, and things which could not be advantageous to the soul. From this mixture, as the Scripture informs us, sprang the giants. Chema is the first of their traditions respecting these arts. The book itself they call Chema: hence the art is called 'Chemia.' Few words have had their origin more pertinaciously disputed than Alchemy or Chemistry. That its immediate source is the Greek *χήμεια,* all agree; but the further investigation presents great difficulties. Mr. Palmer, the late Professor of Arabic in the University of Cambridge, gives the following derivation: "Alchemy, or more properly Alkemy, is so named from the substantive Kaymon; that is, the substance or constitution of anything from the root Kama."

Now, upon this Dr. Young observes, that the Egyptians were not very anxious about the *composition* of bodies. The four elements usually recognised as such, were universally acknowledged to be the *components* of all bodies, and the attention of ancient philosophers was rather directed to the results of combinations. He considered a more probable derivation to be found in the Coptic khems, or chems, signifying dark, obscure, to which root he also refers

the German geheim, secret. And in this Brande[1] agrees with him. Others have derived it from χύω, to melt; others from χύμος, juice; others from χιμὴς, a scientific person; which advances the inquiry but one step, for the difficulty would still remain to ascertain the origin of χιμής. Others, among whom stands Bryant, from Chémi, the Coptic name for Egypt. Of all these, the most worthy of attention is that which comes recommended by the names of Young and Brande.

The MSS. of Zosimus, quoted above, was written in the fifth century, and is preserved in the royal library at Paris. It is, however, by no means clear that the Chema, which he mentions, comprises all the Alchemy[2] of later times. This opinion was strengthened by the writings of Clement[3] of Alexandria, who speaks of the angels having revealed to their earthly loves those mysteries which the faithful among the heavenly host presumed hidden till the coming of the Lord, and attributes to this cause the manifestation of these sublime secrets. Clement, however, referred evidently to the wonders wrought by Magic, in the possibility of which he was a believer. But passages more to the purpose of alchemists, were to be found in Eusebius and Tertullian. The former,[4] giving an account of the books attributed to Enoch, assigns the revelation not only

[1] Brande's Chemistry, vol. i. p. 2.

[2] The title of the work is said to be, "A faithful description of the sacred and divine art of making gold and silver, by Zosimus the Panapolite." It is necessary to mention that the genuineness of the MSS. has been suspected.

[3] Strom. 5.

[4] Apud Scaliger. v. Olaus Borrichius.

of charms and philtres, but also of working in metal, to the fallen angels, and expressly names Hexael as the spirit who made known the art of forming swords and breastplates for men, and golden ornaments for women: and Tertullian,[1] on the same authority, states the same thing. That the astrologieal studies of the aneients led them to many eurious conelusions respecting the metals, we see by all that has eome down to us of their astrological writings. They attributed to each planet the rule over a particular metal, and having previously given the planet the character of the god whose name it bore, they readily transferred a set of similar qualities to the metal whieh it governed. The choiee was made with great judgment, and the alchemical writers, taking advantage of this unusual partition of the metals among the planets, enroll all the professors of Astrology among the adepti. A remark of Psellus,[2] that Democritus wrote eoneerning the tincture of the sun and moon, and eoneerning preeious stones and purple, furnished the required handle.

It had been remarked by Diodorus Sieulus,[3] that Democritus studied Astrology ehiefly in Egypt, and it was therefore remarked that there were two kinds of Astrology; one which referred to the heavenly bodies, and one which referred to "the bright stars of the great mother earth,[4] that is, the magnificent globes of the metals." So, because, on the authority of Michael Psellus, Democritus wrote on the tincture

[1] De Cult. Fœminarum, cap. x.
[2] Epist. ad Xiphilinum.
[3] Lib. iii. cap. vi.
[4] Olaus Borrichius de Ortu, &c.

of the sun and the moon, he must be one of the leaders of the Hermetic Science. The same connection between the planets and the metals is mentioned by Origen,[1] as being acknowledged in the mysteries of Mithra by the Persians, to intimate the transit of the soul through the seven planets. There was a scale of seven gates made of the seven planetary metals; and since Kircher[2] derives Mithra from Mizraim, so there can be no difficulty in recognising the whole as an alchemical allegory, and, as Borrichius contends, merely an arcanic mode of celebrating the mysteries of Egyptian philosophy. To the same purpose the well-known story of the rings of Apollonius has been adduced, and an inscription preserved by Gruter,

DEO INVICTO AVRO SECUNDINIUS DONATUS FRUMENTAR.

The identity of Astrology and Alchemy being thus proved to the student's satisfaction, the fables concerning the former might, of course, be received as historic truths concerning the latter; and, hence, we hear of Abraham and Melchisedec, of Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, of Jannes and Jambres, of Moses and Aaron, of Solomon and Daniel, and, in a word, of nearly every saint or great man of the Old Testament dispensation. That Moses must have had more knowledge of Chemistry than prevailed during the middle ages, is contended from the fact,[3] that he reduced to powder the golden calf made by Aaron from the ear-rings of the people; but the sacred

[1] Lib. vi. cont. Celsum.
[2] In Obelisc. Pamphyl.
[3] Exod. xxxii. 20.

narrative does not give us to understand that the gold underwent any change. It was burned, that is, melted and beaten into thin laminæ, and then in a shape somewhat like gold-leaf strewed upon (not mixed with) the water; this is what the passage in Exodus seems to imply, and this requires no greater knowledge of Chemistry than the formation of the calf did of magic. The Rabbins, indeed, say that the whole transaction was magical, and that Aaron spoke the literal truth when he said, "Then I cast the gold into the fire and there came out this calf!"

It might reasonably be expected that a character so prominent in the annals of Metallurgy as Tubal Cain, would not be forgotten by the alchemists; and, accordingly, we find this great art attributed to him; an honour which he shares with Abraham and Adam. The first writer after Julius Firmicus Maternus and Zosimus, or, rather, the first writer after those whose works are printed, who makes mention of Chemistry, meaning thereby Alchemy, is Suidas. Borrichius and Dr. Shaw give a list of authors, writing between the fifth and eleventh centuries, in barbarous Greek, among whose names occur those of Hermes, Isis, Cleopatra, Democritus, Horus, Porphyry, Plato, and Aristotle. But since these names are attached to the productions of modern and obscure writers, the assumed date of the copies cannot always be depended upon, even where such are given; and as we find forgeries of ancient writings made to support other forgeries, as, for instance, a tract assigned to Albertus Magnus to substantiate the antiquity of the emerald table of Hermes Tris-

megistus, but small reliance can be placed on the genuineness of documents treating of Chemistry, and claiming any high antiquity. The testimony of Suidas is, however, unquestionable, it consists in two articles in his Lexicon, χήμεια and δέρας—"Chemistry—the preparation of silver and gold. The books on it were sought out by Dioclesian, and burnt, on account of the new attempts made by the Egyptians against him. He treated them with cruelty and harshness, as he sought out the books written by the ancients on the Chemistry of gold and silver, and burnt them. His object was to prevent the Egyptians from becoming rich by the knowledge of this art; lest, emboldened by abundance of wealth, they might afterwards be induced to resist the Romans;" this is the passage under the article χήμεια, that on δέρας is not less curious. "Δέρας, the Golden Fleece, which Jason and the Argonauts (after a voyage through the Black Sea to Colchis) took, together with Medea, daughter of Æetes, the king. But this is not what the poets represent, but a treatise written on skins (δέρμασι) teaching how gold might be prepared by Chemistry. Probably it was called golden by those who lived at that time, on account of its great importance."

Now from these two passages much may be learned. We find first, that there were books on this subject written by those who, in the time of Diocletian, were accounted ancients (τοῖς παλαιοῖς γεγράμμενα βίβλια); next, that these books were principally found among the Egyptians; that Diocletian and his advisers not only believed in the possibility of the art

but also in its practicability, and that it was possessed in so great a degree of perfection by the Egyptians as to render them formidable enemies on account of the unlimited treasure thus placed at their command: and we learn also, that so high was the antiquity assigned to the Hermetic art by those who in the days of Suidas were most capable of judging, that even the fables of mythology, referring to the most remote period, were imagined to have an alchemical meaning. The books were burnt, and we have no opportunity of ascertaining how far the ideas of the ancients agreed with the visionary notions of more recent alchemists; but those who have maintained the truth of the science, have not failed to quote the authority of Suidas. The passages are worth considering, were it only because they will lead us to investigate some subjects over which a needless obscurity has been thrown. The late Sir William Drummond thought proper to write, and the editors of the "Classical Journal"[1] to insert, an elaborate defence of Egyptian Alchemy. For the purpose above-mentioned we shall condense the argument he offers into as short a space as possible. After asserting that the ancient Egyptians could not have possessed gold by any of the ordinary modes, inasmuch as they had no mines, and were not addicted to commerce, he alludes to the vast buildings which they erected, the magnificent public works which they constructed, the Labyrinth, the lake Mœris, the Pyramids, and finally he mentions the tomb of Osymandias, the golden circle in which he values at 14,000,000*l.* sterling. He quotes

[1] No. 38.

the passage of Herodotus, in which it is stated that the charge for onions and garlic furnished to the labourers on the Pyramids amounted to sixteen hundred silver talents, *i. e.* to about 600,000*l.* sterling. "Gold," observes he, "was so plentiful that the hunter formed his weapons, and the labourer his tools of this precious metal." After noticing the great hatred with which the Egyptians regarded Cambyses and his Persian followers, he states that the priests, who alone possessed the power of making gold, concealed their knowledge, till the accession of the House of Lagus, when they again made known their scientific knowledge. Athenæus is quoted to prove that at a certain festival held by Ptolemy Philadelphus, so much gold was displayed, that its value cannot be estimated at less than 200,000,000*l.* sterling: these are the assumed facts upon which a defence of Alchemy is founded, and such are the arguments by which it is supported. Now to say nothing of the inconsistency of making a continuous narrative from the works of authors of various degrees of credibility, by rejecting the more credible, and adopting the statement of the less; setting aside the eye-witness and taking the tradition of a comparatively late writer; it may be observed first, that as to the means by which the inhabitants of Egypt obtained gold, they had mines, and the vestiges of them[1] exist to this day; next, that with regard to the

[1] Mr. Wilkinson, in his work on the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, has the following conclusive passage respecting the mines of that people. "The gold mines of Egypt, though mentioned by Agatharcides, and later writers, and worked even by the Arabian Caliphs, long remained unknown, and their position has only been ascertained a few years since by M. Lenant and M. Bononi. They he in the Bistaree

lake Mœris, many learned men deny that it ever existed; and that as to the circle, or rather planisphere of gold over the tomb of Osymandias, Herodotus says nothing about it, and it is very unlikely that so magnificent a monument[1] of Egyptian greatness would have been unnoticed by him, and unmentioned to him, if even the memory of it had subsisted in his time. But the argument derived from the Pyramids is curious. Herodotus does speak of the way in which Cheops raised money to build the great Pyramid, and the account is too absurd to deserve a moment's credit;[2] nor does it appear that the historian himself believed it; but as to the onions and the garlic, the charge is almost ridiculously small; these vegetables were the favourite refreshment of the people, and supported them during their hard

desert, or, as Edréesee and Aboolfeax call it, the land of Biga, or Boja, about seventeen or eighteen days' journey to the south-eastward from Durow, which is situated on the Nile, a little above Koni Ombo, the ancient Ombos. Those two travellers met with some Cufic inscriptions, which, from their dates, show that the mines were worked in the years 339 A. H. (931 A. D.) and 378 A. H. (989 A. D.)." * * *

"The matrix is quartz, and so diligent a search did the Egyptians establish throughout the whole of the deserts east of the Nile for that precious metal, that I never remember to have seen a vein of quartz in any of the primitive ranges there which had not been carefully examined by their miners, certain portions having been invariably picked out of the fissures where it lay, and broken into small fragments." Vol. iii. p. 227.

"One mining station is distinguished by a small stone temple bearing the name and sculptures of Ptolemy Euergetes I." Vol. iii. p. 228. See also Diodorus, iii. 11.

[1] This circle was a planisphere of gold suspended from the ceiling of the chamber of the apartment in which the tomb was; it was three hundred and sixty-five cubits in circumference, and one in thickness: it was divided and marked at every cubit with the days of the year, the rising and setting of the stars, according to their natural revolutions, and the signs ascertained from them by the Egyptian astrologers.—Diodorus, book i. See also Wilkinson, on the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, vol. i. p. 109, *et seq.*

[2] Herodot. Book ii. ch. 126.

labour in that sultry climate by their stimulating qualities.

Let us suppose 360,000 men employed for thirty years in England on public works, and by a master who could make gold *ad libitum.* It would not be thought much that a person *so situated* should allow each man eight pence per diem for beer, tobacco, and spirits; this would amount to 131,400,000*l.* sterling; whereas the refreshments afforded to the Egyptian labourers amounted to somewhat less than one farthing per day among seven men; and as Herodotus states that the charges for other necessaries amounted to about as much more, we have one penny as the cost of food, clothing, tools, and refreshment for fourteen men for a day; these men too were compelled to the work in defiance of the law, and against their own inclination, a circumstance which of itself is sufficient to show how hard was the labour and how small the remuneration. But the whole account of Herodotus goes to show that the Egyptian monarchs laboured under the malady of an exhausted exchequer, and the singular story of Rhampsinitus is peculiarly in point. This prince was richer than any of his predecessors (of whom Osymandias was one), and none of his successors could ever equal him in this respect. If they made their own gold it would have depended upon themselves, yet we are told that his treasures were so sensibly diminished by three visits of a robber—one man—that he began to tremble for the rest. The testimony of Athenæus may be passed over without comment. So much space would not have been

allotted to these arguments were they not the best by which Alchemy has been *historically* supported; even these are not much better than Borrichius' syllogism, that because[1] the Ancient Egyptians hatched eggs in ovens, they therefore possessed the philosopher's stone, and the universal medicine.

The other passage of Suidas is more curiously supported by Hesiod and Apollonius Rhodius, who both declare that the ram which conveyed Phryxus and Helle was changed into gold by *mercury*. This coincidence—for it is hardly possible to believe it more—is of more value to the defender of Alchemy than all the writings of Zosimus or Æneas Gazerus. The making of gold by Caligula from auripigmentum has been already noticed, and the fact that the gold so procured cost more than its intrinsic value; but

[1] De Ortu et Progress. Chem. apud Mang. Bibliotheca Chem. Curio. p. 8.

[2] With regard to the inherent qualities of the elements, and the change of one into the other, Ocellus Lucanus has the following curious passage. "Fire, therefore, is hot and dry, but air is hot and moist, water is moist and cold, but earth is cold and dry. Hence, heat is common to fire and air, cold is common to water and earth; dryness to earth and fire, and moisture to water and air."—"Since water is moist and cold, but air is moist and hot, moisture is common to both; the peculiarity, however, of water is coldness, but of air, heat. When, therefore, the coldness in water vanquishes the heat in air, the mutation from air into water is effected." In like manner he proceeds to show how any one of the elements may be converted into any other. See Ocellus Lucanus on the Nature of the Universe. Taylor's translation, p. 16. Proclus, in his Commentary on the Timæus of Plato, refines upon this doctrine. "Timæus, therefore, alone, or any other who rightly follows him, neither attributes one or two powers alone to the elements, but triple powers; to fire, indeed, tenuity of parts, acuteness, and facility of motion; to air, tenuity of parts, obtuseness, and facility of motion; to water grossness of parts, obtuseness, and facility of motion; and to earth grossness of parts, obtuseness, and difficulty of motion."—"Again, since earth has three physical powers, contrary to the powers of fire, viz. grossness of parts, obtuseness, and difficulty of motion, by taking away difficulty of motion, and introducing facility of motion, we shall produce water, which consists of gross parts, is obtuse, and is easily moved."

there is a circumstance related by Pliny[1] of Tiberius Cæsar, which has been much insisted upon by alchemists, and, as they all refer to it, it can hardly be out of place here. A certain individual boasted to that prince, that among other wonderful secrets he possessed that of making glass malleable. The experiment was made in the presence of the emperor, and with complete success. Tiberius inquired whether any person was acquainted with the process besides himself, and, being answered in the negative, he ordered the inventor to be immediately put to death, stating that such a discovery would render silver and gold of no value. The alchemists have universally understood this remark as implying that the process involved the production of the precious metals, and that its publication must necessarily depreciate them,—a conclusion to which Boerhaave very justly demurs. For, in the first place, Pliny himself speaks of the circumstance as being rather talked of than ascertained to be true,—"Hæc fama crebrior quam verior fuit;" and, in the next place it is evident that where the "vasa murrhina," and vessels of glass or crystal, bore as high a price as they did in the Roman court, any discovery which obviated the brittleness, which was their only disadvantage, would make them commoner, and tend to lessen the necessity for metallic utensils.

The much celebrated riddle, Ælia Lelia Crispis, too, has been supposed by Barnaudius to refer to the philosopher's stone. His treatise, which is ingenious, and to which Borrichius expresses his assent,

[1] Nat. Hist. lib. 35, cap. 26.

is preserved in Mangetus.[1] The riddle itself is an old Roman inscription on marble.

AM. P.P. D.
ÆLIA LELIA CRISPIS
NEC VIR NEC MVLIER NEC ANDROGYNA
NEC PVELLA NEC IVVENIS NEC ANVS
NEC CASTA NEC MERETRIX NEC PVDICA
SED OMNIA
SVBLATA NEC FAME NEC FERRO NEC VENENO
SED OMNIBVS
NEC CÆLO NEC AQUIS NEC TERRIS
SED UBIQVE IACET
LVCIVS AGATHO PRISCIVS
NEC MARITVS NEC AMATOR NEC NECESSARIVS
NEQVE MŒRENS NEQVE GAVDENS NEQVE FLENS
HANC NEQVE MOLEM NEQVE PYRAMIDEM
NEQVE SEPVLCHRVM SED OMNIA
SCIT ET NESCIT QVID CVI POSVERIT
HOC EST SEPVLCHRVM INTVS CADAVER NON HABENS
HOC EST CADAVER SEPVLCHRVM EXTRA NON HABENS
SED CADAVER IDEM EST ET SEPVLCHRVM SVI.

AM. P.P. D.
Ælia Lelia Crispis,
Neither man, woman, nor hermaphrodite,
Neither girl, nor youth, nor old woman,
Neither chaste, nor a harlot, nor modest,
but all.
Taken off neither by famine, nor steel, nor poison,
but by all.
She lies neither in heaven, nor in the waters, nor on earth,
but everywhere.
Lucius Agatho Priscius,
Neither her husband, nor her lover, nor her friend,
Neither mourning, nor rejoicing, nor weeping,
Knows, and knows not what, nor to whom
He has erected this, which is neither a tomb nor
A pyramid, nor a sepulchre, but all.
This is a sepulchre not having a body within,
This is a body not having a sepulchre without,
But the body and its sepulchre are the same thing.

To these passages which have been supposed to prove the existence of Alchemy among the Romans we must not forget to add the verses of Manilius:—

[1] Bibliotheca Chemica Curiosa, vol. ii. p. 713.

> "Sub te (Capricorn) censendum est scrutari cœca metalla,
> Depositas et opes terrarum exquirere venis,
> Materiamque manu certa duplicarier arte,
> Quidquid et argento fabricetur, quidquid et auro."
>
> Astronom. *Lib. iv. v.* 246, *et seq.*

"Under thy influence, oh Capricorn, do we learn to scrutinize the dark metals, and to draw from the veins of the earth her hidden riches, to double the material by an unfailing art," &c. If this passage could be depended upon as genuine it would go but a little way in establishing the fact that the Romans were acquainted with the Hermetic art in the time of Augustus; but the line—

> "Materiamque manu certa duplicarier arte,"

is rejected by the best commentators. Scaliger pronounces it to be "versum barbarum ab illiterato alchymista intrusum;" and Bentley, who rejects it in its present state, proposes to read—

> "Materiamque rudem carâ duplicaverit arte;"

implying that the delicacy of the workmanship doubled the value of the raw material; and this may be the meaning even if the verse rejected by Scaliger and Bentley be accepted. After the era of Caligula we hear nothing more of Alchemy till the time of Julius Firmicus Maternus, who,[1] remarking on the astrological power of certain planets, observes that if any man be born under Saturn he shall have the science of Alchemy. He does not, however, state what this science is: and the next author, whose works require notice is Zosimus,[2] or Æneas Gazerus,[3] who,

[1] Lib. 3, cap. 15.

[2] Boerhaave Institut. Chemiæ Prolegomena, vol. i. p. 15, he refers Zosimus to the seventh, and Gazerus to the sixth, century.

according to Boerhaave was the prior writer. After stating that certain artists had the power of converting any metals into very fine gold. He claims for himself the knowledge of this art, and desires not to be called *χρυσοχόος* or *χημευτὴς*, but *χρυσοποιήσιος*. In the writings of all these Greek authors, no mention is made of the universal remedy, or of the universal solvent, but simply as Zosimus expresses it, in the title of his work, *περὶ τῆς ἱέρης τέχνης τοῦ χρυσοῦ καὶ ἀργύρου*. He wrote also on the composition and qualities of the earth; on chemical intruments and furnaces; and on an incombustible material. But, about this time, the science seems to have attracted more attention; writers upon it become more frequent, and although none of their works have been published, there are upwards of seventy treatises written in Greek, between this period and that of Suidas. These are all written by theologians, and in a theological style; and it is possible that this circumstance may have considerably influenced the style of their successors.

But it was not among the Greeks only that in the seventh century the Hermetic art was studied. In Arabia flourished one of the earliest and most celebrated alchemists, whose works have come down to us —works, however, whose genuineness is more than doubtful. It is not very well known who or what Geber was. Some declare that he was a king, and unhesitatingly call him Rex Geber; others content themselves with making him a physician; and Leo Africanus says that he was a Greek by birth, and having denied his country and his faith, became a Mahomedan. His writings have this peculiarity that

they treat of Medical Alchemy, and could we believe them to be really his, the name of Geber must occupy a very high place not only among alchemists, but also among chemists and physicians.[1]

Between the seventh and the tenth century seems a blank in the annals of Alchemy; and this, perhaps, will be as fit a place as can be found to notice some of those romantic histories which are related of early alchemists. And first of Hermes Trismegistus, from whose name the science itself has been called the Hermetic art. To him are attributed several treatises, the earliest of which were written, in all probability, in the fifth century, some in Latin, for of these no Greek original exists. They are the "Pemander," a treatise on the power and wisdom of God, and translated from the Greek by Marsilius Ficinus; "The Asclepius," (attributed by some to Apuleius), on the "Divine Will," of which only a Latin version is extant. "The Emerald Table," and a treatise on the philosopher's stone, both forgeries of still later times, and which like "The Asclepius" exist only in Latin. His genealogy is thus given by Marsilius Ficinus: —

"At the time that Moses was born flourished Atlas, the astrologer, the brother of Prometheus, the physician, and the maternal grandfather of the elder Mercury, whose grandson was Mercurius Trismegistus.[2]" After this we shall be prepared to hear Albertus Magnus, who in a tract[3] of doubtful genuineness informs us, "that Alexander the Great

[1] Boerhaave, Inst. p. 16, vol. i.
[2] Marsilius Ficinus, Argumentum in lib. Merc. Trismeg.
[3] De Secretis Chemicis.

in one of his journeys discovered the sepulchre of Hermes, filled with all treasures, not metallic, but golden, written on a table of zatadi, which others call emerald." This is quite sufficient to be unintelligible, what follows makes it rather more so. It appears from Avicenna, from whom Albertus, or the author of the tract in question, took the story—that Sarah, the wife of Abraham, took this emerald tablet from the dead body of Hermes in the cave at Hebron; whereas, according to Marsilius Ficinus, whose authorities were doubtless of equal value, Hermes Trismegistus was the grandson of a man whose grandfather lived in the time of Moses. The emerald table has been commented upon by Kriegsman and Dornæus, and by them decided to refer to the universal medicine. A translation[1] is subjoined, extracted from "Thompson's History of Chemistry." Were it only that more than two volumes have been written to elucidate it the riddle would be curious.

A few years ago a person who pretended to have

1. I speak not fictitious things, but what is true and most certain. 2. What is below is like that which is above, and what is above is similar to that which is below, to accomplish the miracles of one thing. 3. And as all things were produced by the meditation of one being, so all things were produced from this one thing by adaptation. 4. Its father is Sol, its mother Luna. The wind carried it in its belly, the earth is its nurse. 5. It is the cause of all perfection throughout the whole world. 6. Its power is perfect if it be changed into earth. 7. Separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross, acting prudently and with judgment. 8. Ascend with the greatest sagacity from the earth to heaven, and then again descend to earth, and unite together the power of things inferior and superior; thus you will possess the glory of the whole world, and all obscurity will fly far away from you. 9. This thing has more fortitude than fortitude itself, because it will overcome every subtle thing, and penetrate every solid thing. 10. By it the world was formed. 11. Hence proceed wonderful things, which in this wise were established. 12. For this reason I am called Hermes Trismegistus, because I possess those parts of the philosophy of the whole world. 13. What I had to say about the operation of Sol is completed."—THOMPSON, *Hist. of Chem.* vol. i. p. 12.

discovered the philosopher's stone, was living at Lilley, near St. Albans. Sir Richard Phillips in his "Personal Tour," gives an account of a singular interview which took place between the two philosophers. Having heard of this gentleman, whose name was Kellerman, Sir Richard called upon him, and gives the following account of his reception. "I lament that I have not the pencil of Hogarth, for a more original figure never was seen. He was about six feet high, and of athletic make; on his head was a white nightcap, and his dress consisted of a long greatcoat, onee green, and he had a sort of jockey waistcoat, with three tiers of pockets. His manner was extremely polite and graceful; but my attention was chiefly absorbed by his singular physiognomy. His complexion was deeply sallow, and his eyes large, black, and rolling. He conducted me into a very large parlour, with a window looking backward; and having locked the door, and put the key in his pocket, he desired me to be seated in one of two large arm-chairs, covered with sheep-skins. The room was a realisation of the well-known picture of Teniers' Alchemist. The floor was covered with retorts, crucibles, alembics, jars, bottles in various shapes, intermingled with old books piled upon each other, with a suffieient quantum of dust and cobwebs. Different shelves were filled in the same manner; and on one side stood his bed. In a corner, somewhat shaded from the light, I beheld two heads, white, with dark wigs on them. I entertained no doubt, therefore, that among other fancies, he was engaged in remaking the speaking brazen head of

Roger Bacon and Albertus. Having stated the reports which I had heard relative to his wonderful discoveries, I told him frankly that mine was a visit of curiosity, and stated that if what I had heard were matter of fact, the researches of the ancient chemists had been unjustly derided. He then gave me a history of his studies, mentioned some men whom I had happened to know in London, who he alleged had assured him that they made gold; that having in consequence examined the works of the ancient alchemists, and discovered the key which they had studiously concealed from the multitude, he had pursued their system, under the influence of new lights, and after suffering numerous disappointments, owing to the ambiguity with which they described their processes, he had at last happily succeeded; had made gold, and could make as much more as he pleased, even to the extent of paying off the national debt in the coin of the realm. When asked to produce some of it, he said, 'Not so, I will show it to no one. I made Lord Liverpool the offer that if he would introduce me to the king, I would show it to his majesty; but Lord Liverpool insolently declined, on the ground that there was no precedent, and I am therefore determined that the secret shall die with me. It is true, that, in order to avenge myself of such contempt, I made a communication to the French ambassador, Prince Polignac, and offered to go to France and transfer to the French government the entire advantages of the discovery; but after deluding me, and shuffling for some time, I found it necessary to treat him with the same contempt as the

other. The world, sir, is in my hands, and in my power.'" With respeet to the universal solvent, the attempt to get a sight of it sueeeeded no better than the former one to see the gold. Mr. K. aecounted for having shut up his house, and guarded the walls by saying that all the governments of Europe had endeavoured to get possession of his secret. To prevent this he had burnt all his writings, and plaeed spring-guns at the windows; by means of his eombustibles he could destroy a whole regiment of soldiers if sent against him. He then related that, as a further protection, he lived entirely in that room, and permitted no one to come into the house, while he had loeked up every room, exeept that, with patent padloeks, and sealed the keyholes. The house is in a most dilapidated state, surrounded with high walls, with hurdles on the top."

Here elose the reeords of Modern Alchemy, and with them the history of those subjeets on whieh these volumes treat. Science is now freed from her superstitions, and History from her fables. The Twin Giants are no longer in the Cradle, and the serpents are dead.

FINIS.

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